
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
VELUT ARBOR ÆVO

THE MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUKE OF SAINT SIMON.

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OF THE

DUKE OF SAINT SIMON

ON THE REIGN OF LOUIS XIV. AND THE REGENCY.

ABRIDGED FROM THE FRENCH.

BY

BAYLE ST. JOHN.

FIRST SERIES.

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MEMOIRS OF THE

DUKE OF SAINT-SIMON.

CHAPTER I.

An honest Courtier—Robbery of Courtin and Fieubet—An important affair—My interview with the King—His jealousy of his Authority—Madame La Queue, the King's daughter—Battle of Blenheim or Hochstedt—Our defeat—Effect of the news on the King—Public grief and public rejoicings—Death of my friend Montfort.

In relating what happened to Madame des Ursins up to her return to Spain, I have carried the narrative into the year 1705. It is now necessary to retrace our steps. Towards the end of 1703 Courtin died. He had early shone at the Council, and had been made Intendant of Picardy. M. de Chaulnes, whose estates were there, begged him to tax them as lightly as possible. Courtin, who was a very intimate friend of M. de Chaulnes, complied with his request; but the next year, in going over his accounts, he found that to do a good turn to M. de Chaulnes he had done an ill turn to many others—that is to say he had relieved M. de Chaulnes at the expense of other parishes, which he had overcharged. The trouble this caused him made him search deeply into the matter,

and he found that the wrong he had done amounted to forty thousand francs. Without a second thought he paid back this money, and asked to be recalled. As he was much esteemed, his request was not at once complied with, but he represented so well that he could not pass his life doing wrong, and unable to serve his friends, that at last what he asked was granted. He afterwards had several embassies, went to England as Ambassador, and was very successful in that capacity. I cannot quit Courtin without relating an adventure he had one day with Fieubet, a Councillor of State like himself. As they were going to St. Germain they were stopped by several men and robbed: robbery was common in those days, and Fieubet lost all he had in his pockets. When the thieves had left them, and while Fieubet was complaining of his misfortune, Courtin began to applaud himself for having saved his watch and fifty pistoles that he had time to slip into his trowsers. Immediately on hearing this, Fieubet put his head out of the coach window, and called back the thieves, who came sure enough to see what he wanted.

"Gentlemen," said he, "you appear to be honest folks in distress; it is not reasonable that you should be the dupes of this gentleman, who has swindled you out of fifty pistoles and his watch." And then turning to Courtin, he smilingly said: "You told me so yourself, monsieur; so give the things up like a man, without being searched."

The astonishment and indignation of Courtin were such that he allowed money and watch to be taken from him without uttering a single word; but when the

thieves were gone away, he would have strangled Fieubet had not this latter been the stronger of the two. Fieubet only laughed at him; and upon arriving at St. Germain told the adventure to everybody he met. Their friends had all the trouble in the world to reconcile them.

The year finished with an affair in which I was not a little interested. During the year there were several grand fêtes, at which the King went to High Mass and vespers. On these occasions a lady of the Court, named by the Queen, or when there was none, by the Dauphiness, made a collection for the poor. The house of Lorraine, always anxious to increase its importance, shirked impudently this duty, in order thereby to give itself a new distinction, and assimilate its rank to that of the princes of the blood. It was a long time before this was perceived. At last the Duchesse de Noailles, the Duchesse de Guiche, her daughter, the Maréchal de Boufflers, and others, took notice of it; and I was soon after informed of it. I determined that the matter should be arranged, and that justice should be done.

The Duchesse de Lude was first spoken to on the subject: she, weak and timid, did not dare to do anything; but at last was induced to speak to Madame le Duchesse de Bourgogne, who, wishing to judge for herself as to the truth of the matter, ordered Madame de Montbazon to make the collection for the poor at the next fête that took place. Although very well, Madame de Montbazon pretended to be ill, stopped in bed half a day, and excused herself on this ground

from performing the duty. Madame de Bourgogne was annoyed, but she did not dare to push matters farther; and, in consequence of this refusal, none of the Duchesses would make the collection. Other ladies of quality soon perceived this, and they also refused to serve; so that the collection fell into all sorts of hands, and sometimes was not made at all. Matters went on so far, indeed, that the King at last grew angry, and threatened to make Madame de Bourgogne herself take this office. But refusals still followed upon refusals, and the bomb thus at length was ready to burst!

The King, who at last ordered the daughter of M. le Grand to take the plate on New Year's Day, 1704, had, it seems, got scent of the part I was taking in this matter, and expressed himself to Madame de Maintenon, as I learnt, as very discontented with me and one or two other Ducs. He said that the Ducs were much less obedient to him than the Princes; and that although many Duchesses had refused to make the collection, the moment he had proposed that the daughter of M. le Grand should take it, M. le Grand consented. On the next day, early in the morning, I saw Chamillart, who related to me that on the previous evening, before he had had time to open his business, the King had burst out in anger against me, saying it was very strange, but that since I had quitted the army I did nothing but meddle in matters of rank and bring actions against everybody; finishing, by declaring that if he acted well he should send me so far away that I should be unable to importune him

any more. Chamillart added, that he had done all in his power to appease the King, but with little effect.

After consulting with my friends, I determined to go up to the King and boldly ask to speak to him in his cabinet, believing that to be the wisest course I could pursue. He was not yet so reconciled to me as he afterwards became, and, in fact, was sorely out of humour with me. This step did not seem, therefore, altogether unattended with danger; but, as I have said, I resolved to take it. As he passed, therefore, from his dinner that same day, I asked permission to follow him into his cabinet. Without replying to me, he made a sign that I might enter, and went into the embrasure of the window.

When we were quite alone I explained, at considerable length, my reasons for acting in this matter, declaring that it was from no disrespect to his Majesty that I had requested Madame de St. Simon and the other Duchesses to refuse to collect for the poor, but simply to bring those to account, who had claimed without reason to be exempt from this duty. I added, keeping my eyes fixed upon the King all the time, that I begged him to believe that none of his subjects were more submissive to his will or more willing to acknowledge the supremacy of his authority in all things than the Ducs. Until this his tone and manner had been very severe; but now they both softened, and he said, with much goodness and familiarity, that "that was how it was proper to speak and think," and other remarks equally gracious. I took then the opportunity of expressing the sorrow I felt at seeing, that while my sole

endeavour was to please him, my enemies did all they could to blacken me in his eyes, indicating that, I suspected M. le Grand, who had never pardoned me for the part I took in the affair of the Princesse d'Harcourt, was one of the number. After I had finished the King remained still a moment, as if ready to hear if I had anything more to say, and then quitted me with a bow, slight but very gracious, saying it was well, and that he was pleased with me.

I learnt afterwards that he said the same thing of me in the evening to Chamillart, but, nevertheless, that he did not seem at all shaken in his prejudice in favour of M. le Grand. The King was in fact very easy to prejudice, difficult to lead back, and most unwilling to seek enlightenment, or to listen to any explanations, if authority was in the slightest degree at stake. Whoever had the address to make a question take this shape, might be assured that the King would throw aside all consideration of justice, right, and reason, and dismiss all evidence. It was by playing on this chord that his ministers knew how to manage him with so much art, and to make themselves despotic masters, causing him to believe all they wished, while at the same time they rendered him inaccessible to explanation, and to those who might have explained.

I have, perhaps, too much expanded an affair which might have been more compressed. But in addition to the fact, that I was mixed up in it, it is by these little private details, as it seems to me, that the character of the Court and King are best made known.

In the early part of the next year, 1704, the King made La Queue, who was a captain of cavalry, camp-master. This La Queue was seigneur of the place of which he bore the name, distant six leagues from Versailles, and as much from Dreux. He had married a girl that the King had had by a gardener's wife. Bontems, the confidential valet of the King, had brought about the marriage without declaring the names of the father or the mother of the girl; but La Queue knew it, and promised himself a fortune. The girl herself was tall and strongly resembled the King. Unfortunately for her, she knew the secret of her birth, and much envied her three sisters,—recognised, and so grandly married. She lived on very good terms with her husband—always, however, in the greatest privacy—and had several children by him. La Queue himself, although by this marriage son-in-law of the King, seldom appeared at the Court, and when there, was on the same footing as the simplest soldier. Bontems did not fail from time to time to give him money. The wife of La Queue lived very melancholy for twenty years in her village, never left it, and scarcely ever went abroad for fear of betraying herself.

On Wednesday, the 25th of June, Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne had a son born to him. This event caused great joy to the King and the Court. The town shared their delight, and carried their enthusiasm almost to madness, by the excess of their demonstration, and their fêtes. The King gave a fête at Marly, and made the most magnificent presents to Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne when she left

her bed. But we soon had reason to repent of so much joy, for the child died in less than a year—and of so much money unwisely spent in fêtes when it was wanted for more pressing purposes. Even while these rejoicings were being celebrated, news reached us which spread consternation in every family, and cast a gloom over the whole city.

I have already said that a grand alliance, with the Emperor at its head, had been formed against France, and that our troops were opposing the allies in various parts of Europe. The Elector of Bavaria had joined his forces to ours, and had already done us some service. On the 12th of August he led his men into the plain of Hochstedt, where, during the previous year, he had gained a victory over the Imperialists. In this plain he was joined by our troops, who took up positions right and left of him, under the command of Tallard and Marsin. The Elector himself had command of all. Soon after their arrival at Hochstedt, they received intelligence that Prince Eugène, with the Imperialist forces, and the Duke of Marlborough with the English, were coming to meet them. Our generals had, however, all the day before them to choose their ground, and to make their dispositions. It would have been difficult to succeed worse, both with the one and the other. A brook, by no means of a miry kind, ran parallel to our army; and in front of it a spring, which formed a long and large quagmire, nearly separated the two lines of Marshal Tallard. It was a strange situation for a general to take up, who is master of a vast plain; and it became, as will be seen,

a very sad one. At his extreme right was the large village of Blenheim, in which, by a blindness without example, he had placed twenty-six battalions of infantry, six regiments of dragoons, and a brigade of cavalry. It was an entire army merely for the purpose of holding this village and supporting his right, and of course he had all these troops the less to aid him in the battle which took place. The first battle of Hochstedt afforded a lesson which ought to have been studied on this occasion. There were many officers present, too, who had been at that battle; but they were not consulted. One of two courses was open, either to take up a position behind the brook, and parallel to it, so as to dispute its passage with the enemies, or to take advantage of the disorder they would be thrown into in crossing it by attacking them then. Both these plans were good; the second was the better; but neither were adopted. What was done, was to leave a large space between our troops and the brook, that the enemy might pass at their ease, and be overthrown afterwards, as was said. With such dispositions it is impossible to doubt but that our chiefs were struck with blindness. The Danube flowed near enough to Blenheim to be of sufficient support to our right, better indeed than that village, which consequently there was no necessity to hold.

The enemies arrived on the 13th of August at the dawn, and at once took up their position on the banks of the brook. Their surprise must have been great to see our army so far off, drawn up in battle array. They profited by the extent of ground left to them, crossed the brook at nearly every point, formed themselves in

several lines on the side to which they crossed, and then extended themselves at their ease, without receiving the slightest opposition. This is exact truth, but without any appearance of being so ; and posterity will with difficulty believe it. It was nearly eight o'clock before all these dispositions, which our troops saw made without moving, were completed. Prince Eugène with his army had the right; the Duke of Marlborough the left. The latter thus opposed to the forces of Tallard, and Prince Eugène to those of Marsin.

The battle commenced; and in one part was so far favourable to us that the attack of Prince Eugène was repulsed by Marsin, who might have profited by this circumstance but for the unfortunate position of our right. Two things contributed to place us at a disadvantage. The second line, separated by the quagmire I have alluded to from the first line, could not sustain it properly; and in consequence of the long bend it was necessary to make round this quagmire, neither line, after receiving or making a charge, could retire quickly to rally and return again to the attack. As for the infantry, the twenty-six batallions shut up in Blenheim left a great gap in it that could not fail to be felt. The English, who soon perceived the advantage they might obtain from this want of infantry, and from the difficulty with which our cavalry of the right was rallied, profited by these circumstances with the readiness of people who have plenty of ground at their disposal. They redoubled their charges, and to say all in one word, they defeated at their first attack all this army, notwithstanding the efforts of our general officers

and of several regiments to repel them. The army of the Elector, entirely unsupported, and taken in flank by the English, wavered in its turn. All the valour of the Bavarians, all the prodigies of the Elector, were unable to remedy the effects of this wavering. Thus was seen, at one and the same time, the army of Tallard beaten and thrown into the utmost disorder; that of the Elector sustaining itself with great intrepidity, but already in retreat; and that of Marsin charging and gaining ground upon Prince Eugène. It was not until Marsin learnt of the defeat of Tallard and of the Elector, that he ceased to pursue his advantages, and commenced his retreat. This retreat he was able to make without being pursued.

In the meantime the troops in Blenheim had been twice attacked, and had twice repulsed the enemy. Tallard had given orders to these troops on no account to leave their positions, nor to allow a single man even to quit them. Now, seeing his army defeated and in flight, he wished to countermand these orders. He was riding in hot haste to Blenheim to do so, with only two attendants, when all three were surrounded, recognised, and taken prisoners.

These troops shut up in Blenheim had been left under the command of Blansac, camp-marshal, and Clérembault, lieutenant-general. During the battle this latter was missed, and could nowhere be found. It was known afterwards that, for fear of being killed, he had endeavoured to escape across the Danube on horseback attended by a single valet. The valet passed over the river in safety, but his master went to the

bottom. Blansac, thus left alone in command, was much troubled by the disorders he saw and heard, and by the want which he felt of fresh orders. He sent a messenger to Tallard for instructions how to act, but his messenger was stopped on the road, and taken prisoner. I only repeat what Blansac himself reported in his defence, which was equally ill-received by the King and the public, but which had no contradictors, for nobody was witness of what took place at Blenheim except those actually there, and they all, the principals at least, agreed in their story. What some of the soldiers said was not of a kind that could altogether be relied upon.

While Blansac was in this trouble, he saw Denonville, one of our officers who had been taken prisoner, coming towards the village, accompanied by an officer who waved a handkerchief in the air and demanded a parley. Denonville was a young man, very handsome and well made, who being a great favourite with Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne had become presumptuous and somewhat audacious. Instead of speaking in private to Blansac and the other principal officers—since he had undertaken so strange a mission—Denonville, who had some intellect, plenty of fine talk, and a mighty opinion of himself, set to work haranguing the troops, trying to persuade them to surrender themselves prisoners of war, so that they might preserve themselves for the service of the King. Blansac, who saw the wavering this caused among the troops, sharply told Denonville to hold his tongue, and began himself to harangue the troops in a contrary

spirit. But it was too late. The mischief was done. Only one regiment, that of Navarre, applauded him, all the rest maintained a dull silence. I remind my readers that it is Blansac's version of the story I am giving.

Soon after Denonville and his companion had returned to the enemy, an English lord came, demanding a parley with the commandant. He was admitted to Blansac, to whom he said that the Duke of Marlborough had sent him to say, that he had forty batallions and sixty pieces of cannon at his disposal, with reinforcements to any extent at command; that he should surround the village on all sides; that the army of Tallard was in flight, and the remains of that of the Elector in retreat; that Tallard and many general officers were prisoners; that Blansac could hope for no reinforcements; and that, therefore, he had better at once make an honourable capitulation, and surrender himself with all his men prisoners of war, than attempt a struggle in which he was sure to be worsted with great loss. Blansac wanted to dismiss this messenger at once, but the Englishman pressed him to advance a few steps out of the village, and see with his own eyes the defeat of the Electoral army, and the preparations that were made on the other side to continue the battle. Blansac accordingly, attended by one of his officers, followed this lord, and was astounded to see with his own eyes that all he had just heard was true. Returned into Blenheim, Blansac assembled all his principal officers, made them acquainted with the proposition that had been made, and told them what

he had himself seen. Every one comprehended what a frightful shock it would be for the country when it learnt that they had surrendered themselves prisoners of war; but all things well considered, it was thought best to accept these terms, and so preserve to the King the twenty-six batallions and the twelve squadrons of dragoons who were there. This terrible capitulation was at once, therefore, drawn up and signed by Blansac, the general officers, and the heads of every corps except that of Navarre, which was thus the sole which refused.

The number of prisoners that fell to the enemy in this battle was infinite. The Duke of Marlborough took charge of the most distinguished, until he could carry them away to England, to grace his triumph there. He treated them all, even the humblest, with the utmost attention, consideration, and politeness, and with a modesty that did him even more honour than his victory. Those that came under the charge of Prince Louis of Baden were much less kindly treated.

The King received the cruel news of this battle on the 21st of August, by a courier from the Maréchal de Villeroy. By this courier the King learnt that a battle had taken place on the 13th; had lasted from eight o'clock in the morning until evening; that the entire army of Tallard was killed or taken prisoners; that it was not known what had become of Tallard himself, or whether the Elector and Marsin had been at the action. The private letters that arrived were all opened, to see what news they contained, but no fresh

information could be got from them. For six days the King remained in this uncertainty, as to the real losses that had been sustained. Everybody was afraid to write bad news; all the letters which from time to time arrived, gave, therefore, but an unsatisfactory account of what had taken place. The King used every means in his power to obtain some news. Every post that came in was examined by him, but there was little found to satisfy him. Neither the King nor anybody else could understand, from what had reached them, how it was that an entire army had been placed inside a village, and had surrendered itself by a signed capitulation. It puzzled every brain. At last the details, that had oozed out little by little, augmented to a perfect stream, by the arrival of one of our officers, who, taken prisoner, had been allowed by the Duke of Marlborough to go to Paris to relate to the King the misfortune that had happened to him.

We were not accustomed to misfortunes. This one, very reasonably, was utterly unexpected. It seemed in every way the result of bad generalship, of an unjustifiable disposition of troops, and of a series of gross and incredible errors. The commotion was general. There was scarcely an illustrious family that had not had one of its members killed, wounded, or taken prisoner. Other families were in the same case. The public sorrow and indignation burst out without restraint. Nobody who had taken part in this humiliation was spared; the generals and the private soldiers alike came in for blame. Denonville was ignominiously broken for the speech he had made at Blenheim. The generals,

however, were entirely let off. All the punishment fell upon certain regiments, which were broken, and upon certain unimportant officers—the guilty and innocent mixed together. The outcry was universal. The grief of the King at this ignominy, and this loss, at the moment when he imagined that the fate of the Emperor was in his hands, may be imagined. At a time when he might have counted upon striking a decisive blow, he saw himself reduced to act simply on the defensive, in order to preserve his troops; and had to repair the loss of an entire army, killed or taken prisoners. The sequel showed not less that the hand of God was weighty upon us. All judgment was lost. We trembled even in the midst of Alsace.

In the midst of all this public sorrow the rejoicings and the fêtes for the birth of the Duc de Bretagne, son of Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne, were not discontinued. The city gave a firework fête upon the river, that Monseigneur, the Princes, his sons, and Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne, with many ladies and courtiers came to see from the windows of the Louvre, magnificent cheer and refreshments being provided for them. This was a contrast which irritated the people, who would not understand that it was meant for magnanimity. A few days afterwards the King gave an illumination and a fête at Marly, to which the Court of St. Germain was invited, and which was all in honour of Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne. He thanked the *Prévôt des Marchands* for the fireworks upon the river, and said that Monseigneur and Madame had found them very beautiful.

Shortly after this, I received a letter from one of my friends, the Duc de Montfort, who had always been in the army of the Maréchal de Villeroy. He sent word to me, that upon his return he intended to break his sword, and retire from the army. His letter was written in such a despairing tone that, fearing lest with his burning courage he might commit some martial folly, I conjured him not to throw himself into danger for the sake of being killed. It seemed that I had anticipated his intentions. A convoy of money was to be sent to Landau. Twice he asked to be allowed to take charge of this convoy, and twice he was told it was too insignificant a charge for a camp-marshal to undertake. The third time that he asked this favour, he obtained it by pure importunity. He carried the money safely into Landau, without meeting with any obstacle. On his return he saw some hussars roving about. Without a moment's hesitation he resolved to give chase to them. He was with difficulty restrained for some time, and at last, breaking away, he set off to attack them, followed by only two officers. The hussars dispersed themselves, and retreated; the Duc de Montfort followed them, rode into the midst of them, was surrounded on all sides, and soon received a blow which overturned him. In a few moments after, being carried off by his men, he died, having only had time to confess himself, and to arrive at his quarters. He was infinitely regretted by everybody who had known him. The grief of his family may be imagined.

CHAPTER II.

Naval Battle of Malaga—Danger of Gibraltar—Duke of Mantua in Search of a Wife—Duchesse de Lesdiguières—Strange Intrigues—Mademoiselle d'Elbœuf carries off the Prize—A curious Marriage—Its Result—History of a Conversion to Catholicism—Attempted Assassination—Singular Seclusion.

THE King did not long remain without some consolation for the loss of the battle of Hochstedt (Blenheim). The Comte de Toulouse—very different in every respect from his brother, the Duc du Maine—was wearied with cruising in the Mediterranean, without daring to attack enemies that were too strong for him. He had, therefore, obtained reinforcements this year, so that he was in a state to measure his forces with any opponent. The English fleet was under the command of Admiral Rooke. The Comte de Toulouse wished above all things to attack. He asked permission to do so, and, the permission being granted, he set about his enterprise. He met the fleet of Admiral Rooke near Malaga, on the 24th of September of this year, and fought with it from ten o'clock in the morning until eight o'clock in the evening. The fleets, as far as the number of vessels was concerned, were nearly equal. So furious or so obstinate a sea-fight had not been seen for a long time. They had always the wind upon our fleet, yet all the advantage was on

the side of the Comte de Toulouse, who could boast that he had obtained the victory, and whose vessel fought that of Rooke, dismasted it, and pursued it all next day towards the coast of Barbary, where the Admiral retired. The enemy lost six thousand men; the ship of the Dutch Vice-Admiral was blown up; several others were sunk, and some dismasted. Our fleet lost neither ship nor mast, but the victory cost the lives of many distinguished people, in addition to those of fifteen hundred soldiers or sailors killed or wounded.

Towards evening on the 25th, by dint of manœuvres, aided by the wind, our fleet came up again with that of Rooke. The Comte de Toulouse was for attacking it again on the morrow, and showed that if the attack were successful, Gibraltar would be the first result of the victory. That famous place, which commands the important strait of the same name, had been allowed to fall into neglect, and was defended by a miserable garrison of forty men. In this state it had of course easily fallen into the hands of the enemies. But they had not yet had time to man it with a much superior force, and Admiral Rooke once defeated, it must have surrendered to us.

The Comte de Toulouse urged his advice with all the energy of which he was capable, and he was supported in opinion by others of more experience than himself. But D'O, the mentor of the fleet, against whose counsel he had been expressly ordered by the King never to act, opposed the project of another attack with such disdainful determination, that the Comte had no course open but to give way. The

annoyance which this caused throughout the fleet was very great. It soon was known what would have become of the enemy's fleet had it been attacked, and that Gibraltar would have been found in exactly the same state as when abandoned. The Comte de Toulouse acquired great honour in this campaign, and his stupid teacher lost little, because he had little to lose.

M. de Mantua having surrendered his state to the King, thereby rendering us a most important service in Italy, found himself ill at ease in his territory, which had become the theatre of war, and had come *incognito* to Paris. He had apartments provided for him in the Luxembourg, furnished magnificently with the Crown furniture, and was very graciously received by the King. The principal object of his journey was to marry some French lady; and as he made no secret of this intention, more than one plot was laid in order to provide him with a wife. M. de Vaudemont, intent upon aggrandising the house of Lorraine, wished M. de Mantua to marry a member of that family, and fixed upon Mademoiselle d'Elbœuf for his bride. The Lorraines did all in their power to induce M. de Mantua to accept her. But M. le Prince had also his designs in this matter. He had a daughter, whom he knew not how to get off his hands, and he thought that in more ways than one it would be to his advantage to marry her to the Duke of Mantua. He explained his views to the King, who gave him permission to follow them out, and promised to serve him with all his protection. But when the subject was broached to M. de Mantua, he declined this match in such a respectful, yet firm,

manner, that M. le Prince felt he must abandon all hope of carrying it out. The Lorraines were not more successful in their designs. When M. de Vaudemont had first spoken of Mademoiselle d'Elbœuf, M. de Mantua had appeared to listen favourably. This was in Italy. Now that he was in Paris he acted very differently. It was in vain that Mademoiselle d'Elbœuf was thrust in his way, as though by chance, at the promenades, in the churches ; her beauty, which might have touched many others, made no impression upon him. The fact was that M. de Mantua, even long before leaving his state, had fixed upon a wife.

Supping one evening with the Duc de Lesdiguières, a little before the death of the latter, he saw a ring with a portrait in it, upon the Duc's finger. He begged to be allowed to look at the portrait, was charmed with it, and said he should be very happy to have such a beautiful mistress. The Duc at this burst out laughing, and said it was the portrait of his wife. As soon as the Duc de Lesdiguières was dead, M. de Mantua thought only of marrying the young widowed Duchesse. He sought her everywhere when he arrived in Paris, but without being able to find her, because she was in the first year of her widowhood. He therefore unbosomed himself to Torcy, who reported the matter to the King. The King approved of the design of M. de Mantua, and charged the Maréchal de Duras to speak to the Duchesse de Lesdiguières, who was his daughter. The Duchesse was equally surprised and afflicted when she learned what was in progress. She testified to her father her repugnance to abandon her-

self to the caprices and the jealousy of an old Italian *débauché*; the horror she felt at the idea of being left alone with him in Italy; and the reasonable fear she had of her health, with a man whose own could not be good.

I was promptly made acquainted with this affair; for Madame de Lesdiguières and Madame de Saint Simon were on the most intimate terms. I did everything in my power to persuade Madame de Lesdiguières to consent to the match, insisting at once on her family position, on the reason of state, and on the pleasure of ousting Madame d'Elbœuf,—but it was all in vain. I never saw such firmness. Pontchartrain, who came and reasoned with her, was even less successful than I, for he excited her by threats and menaces. M. le Prince himself supported us—having no longer any hope for himself, and fearing, above all things, M. de Mantua's marriage with a Lorraine—and did all he could to persuade Madame de Lesdiguières to give in. I renewed my efforts in the same direction, but with no better success than before. Nevertheless, M. de Mantua, irritated by not being able to see Madame de Lesdiguières, resolved to go and wait for her on a Sunday at the Minimes. He found her shut up in a chapel, and drew near the door in order to see her as she went out. He was not much gratified; her thick crape veil was lowered; it was with difficulty he could get a glance at her. Resolved to succeed, he spoke to Torcy, intimating that Madame de Lesdiguières ought not to refuse such a slight favour as to allow herself to be seen in a church. Torcy communicated this to the King, who sent word to

Madame de Lesdiguières that she must consent to the favour M. de Mantua demanded. She could not refuse after this. M. de Mantua went accordingly, and waited for her in the same place, where he had once already so badly seen her. He found her in the chapel, and drew near the door, as before. She came out, her veil raised, passed lightly before him, made him a sliding courtesy as she glided by, in reply to his bow, and reached her coach.

M. de Mantua was charmed: he redoubled his efforts with the King and M. de Duras; the matter was discussed in full council, like an affair of state—indeed it *was* one; and it was resolved to amuse M. de Mantua, and yet at the same time time to do everything to vanquish this resistance of Madame de Lesdiguières, except employing the full authority of the King, which the King himself did not wish to exert. Everything was promised to her on the part of the King: that it should be his Majesty who would make the stipulations of the marriage contract; that it should be his Majesty who would give her a dowry, and would guarantee her return to France if she became a widow, and assure her his protection while she remained a wife: in one word, everything was tried, and in the gentlest and most honourable manner, to persuade her. Her mother lent us her house one afternoon, in order that we might speak more at length and more at our ease there to Madame de Lesdiguières than we could at the Hôtel de Duras. We only gained a torrent of tears for our pains.

A few days after this, I was very much astonished

to hear Chamillart relate to me all that had passed at this interview. I learnt afterwards that Madame de Lesdiguières, fearing that if, entirely unsupported, she persisted in her refusal, it might draw upon her the anger of the King, had begged Chamillart to implore his Majesty not to insist upon this marriage. M. de Mantua hearing this, turned his thoughts elsewhere; and she was, at last, delivered of a pursuit which had become a painful persecution to her. Chamillart served her so well that the affair came to an end; and the King, flattered perhaps by the desire this young Duchesse showed to remain his subject instead of becoming a sovereign, passed an eulogium upon her the same evening in his cabinet to his family and to the Princesses, by whom it was spread abroad through society.

I may as well finish this matter at once. The Lorraines, who had watched very closely the affair up to this point, took hope again directly they heard of the resolution M. de Mantua had formed to abandon his pursuit of Madame de Lesdiguières. They, in their turn, were closely watched by M. le Prince, who so excited the King against them, that Madame d'Elbœuf received orders from him not to continue pressing her suit upon M. de Mantua. That did not stop them. They felt that the King would not interfere with them by an express prohibition, and sure, by past experience, of being on better terms with him afterwards than before, they pursued their object with obstinacy. By dint of much plotting and scheming, and by the aid of their creatures, they contrived to overcome the repugnance of M. de Mantua to Mademoiselle

d'Elbœuf, which at bottom could be only caprice—her beauty, her figure, and her birth taken into account. But Mademoiselle d'Elbœuf, in her turn, was as opposed to marriage with M. de Mantua as Madame de Lesdiguières had been. She was, however, brought round ere long, and then the consent of the King was the only thing left to be obtained. The Lorraines made use of their usual suppleness in order to gain that. They represented the impolicy of interfering with the selection of a sovereign who was the ally of France, and who wished to select a wife from among her subjects, and succeeded so well, that the King determined to become neutral; that is to say, neither to prohibit nor to sanction this match. M. le Prince was instrumental in inducing the King to take this neutral position; and he furthermore caused the stipulation to be made, that it should not be celebrated in France, but at Mantua.

After parting with the King, M. de Mantua, on the 21st of September, went to Nemours, slept there, and then set out for Italy. At the same time Madame and Mademoiselle d'Elbœuf, with Madame de Pompadour, sister of the former, passed through Fontainebleau without going to see a soul, and followed their prey lest he should change his mind and escape them—until the road he was to take branched off from that they were to go by; he in fact intending to travel by sea and they by land. On the way their fears redoubled. Arrived at Nevers, and lodged in an hostelrie, they thought it would not be well to commit themselves further without more certain security. Madame de Pompadour therefore proposed to M. de Mantua not

to delay his happiness any longer, but to celebrate his marriage at once. He defended himself as well as he could, but was at last obliged to give in. During this indecent dispute, the Bishop was sent to. He had just died, and the Grand Vicar not knowing what might be the wishes of the King upon this marriage, refused to celebrate it. The chaplain was therefore appealed to, and he at once married Mademoiselle d'Elbœuf to M. de Mantua in the hotel. As soon as the ceremony was over, Madame d'Elbœuf wished to leave her daughter alone with M. de Mantua, and although he strongly objected to this, everybody quitted the room, leaving only the newly married couple there, and Madame de Pompadour outside upon the step listening to what passed between them. But finding after a while that both were very much embarrassed, and that M. de Mantua did little but cry out for the company to return, she conferred with her sister, and they agreed to give him his liberty. Immediately he had obtained it, he mounted his horse, though it was not early, and did not see them again until they reached Italy—though all went the same road as far as Lyons. The news of this strange celebration of marriage was soon spread abroad with all the ridicule which attached to it.

The King was very much annoyed when he learnt that his orders had been thus disobeyed. The Lorraines plastered over the affair by representing that they feared an affront from M. de Mantua, and indeed it did not seem at all unlikely that M. de Mantua, forced as it were into compliance with their wishes, might have

liked nothing better than to reach Italy and then laugh at them. Meanwhile Madame d'Elbœuf and her daughter embarked on board the royal galleys and started for Italy. On the way they were fiercely chased by some African Corsairs, and it is a great pity they were not taken to finish the romance.

However, upon arriving in Italy, the marriage was again celebrated, this time with all the forms necessary for the occasion. But Madame d'Elbœuf had no cause to rejoice that she had succeeded in thus disposing of her daughter. The new Duchesse de Mantua was guarded by her husband with the utmost jealousy. She was not allowed to see anybody except her mother, and that only for an hour each day. Her women entered her apartment only to dress and undress her. The Duc walled up very high all the windows of his house, and caused his wife to be guarded by old women. She passed her days thus in a cruel prison. This treatment, which I did not expect; and the little consideration, not to say contempt showed here for M. de Mantua since his departure, consoled me much for the invincible obstinacy of Madame de Lesdiguières. Six months after, Madame d'Elbœuf returned, beside herself with vexation, but too vain to show it. She disguised the misfortune of her daughter, and appeared to be offended if it was spoken of; but all our letters from the army showed that the news was true. The strangest thing of all is, that the Lorraines after this journey were as well treated by the King as if they had never undertaken it; a fact which shows their art and ascendancy.

I have dwelt too long perhaps upon this matter. It appeared to me to merit attention by its singularity, and still more so because it is by facts of this sort that is shown what was the composition of the Court of the King.

About this time the Comtesse d'Auvergne finished a short life by an illness very strange and uncommon. When she married the Comte d'Auvergne she was a Huguenot, and he much wanted to make her turn Catholic. A famous advocate of that time, who was named Chardon, had been a Huguenot, and his wife also: they had made a semblance, however, of abjuring, but made no open profession of Catholicism. Chardon was sustained by his great reputation, and by the number of protectors he had made for himself. One morning he and his wife were in their coach before the Hôtel-Dieu, waiting for a reply that their lackey was a very long time in bringing them. Madame Chardon glanced by chance upon the grand portal of Notre Dame, and little by little fell into a profound reverie, which might be better called reflection. Her husband, who at last perceived this, asked her what had sent her into such deep thought, and pushed her elbow even to draw a reply from her. She told him then what she was thinking about. Pointing to Notre Dame, she said that it was many centuries before Luther and Calvin that those images of saints had been sculptured over that portal; that this proved that saints had long since been invoked; the opposition of the reformers to this ancient opinion was a novelty; that this novelty rendered suspicious other dogmas

against the antiquity of Catholicism that they taught; that these reflections, which she had never before made, gave her much disquietude, and made her form the resolution to seek to enlighten herself.

Chardon thought his wife right, and from that day they laid themselves out to seek the truth, then to consult, then to be instructed. This lasted a year, and then they made a new abjuration, and both ever afterwards passed their lives in zeal and good works. Madame Chardon converted many Huguenots. The Comte d'Auvergne took his wife to her. The Comtesse was converted by her, and became a very good Catholic. When she died she was extremely regretted by all the relatives of her husband, although at first they had looked upon her coldly.

In the month of this September, a strange attempt at assassination occurred. Vervins had been forced into many suits against his relatives, and was upon the point of gaining all of them, when one of his cousins-german, who called himself the Abbé de Pré, caused him to be attacked as he passed in his coach along the Quai de la Tournelle, before the community of Madame de Miramion. Vervins was wounded with several sword cuts, and also his coachman who wished to defend him. In consequence of the complaint Vervins made, the Abbé escaped abroad, whence he never returned, and soon after, his crime being proved, was condemned to be broken alive on the wheel. Vervins had long been menaced with an attack by the Abbé. Vervins was an agreeable well-made man, but very idle. He had entered the army; but quitted it soon, and retired

to his estates in Picardy. There he shut himself up without any cause of disgust or of displeasure, without being in any embarrassment, for on the contrary he was well to do, and all his affairs were in good order, and he never married; without motives of piety, for piety was not at all in his vein; without being in bad health, for his health was always perfect; without a taste for improvement, for no workmen were ever seen in his house; still less on account of the chase, for he never went to it. Yet he stayed in his house for several years, without intercourse with a soul, and what is most incomprehensible, without budging from his bed, except to allow it to be made. He dined there, and often all alone; he transacted what little business he had to do there, and received while there the few people he could not refuse admission to; and each day, from the moment he opened his eyes until he closed them again, worked at tapestry, or read a little; he persevered until his death in this strange fashion of existence; so uniquely singular, that I have wished to describe it.

CHAPTER III.

Fascination of the Duchesse de Bourgogne—Fortunes of Nangis—He is loved by the Duchesse and her Dame d'Atours—Discretion of the Court—Maulevrier—His Courtship of the Duchesse—Singular Trick—Its strange Success—Mad Conduct of Maulevrier—He is sent to Spain—His Adventures there—His Return and tragical Catastrophe.

THERE presents itself to my memory an anecdote which it would be very prudent perhaps to be silent upon, and which is very curious for anybody who has seen things so closely as I have, to describe. What determines me to relate it is, that the fact is not altogether unknown, and that every Court swarms with similar adventures. Must it be said then? We had amongst us a charming young Princesse who, by her graces, her attentions, and her original manners, had taken possession of the hearts of the King, of Madame de Maintenon, and of her husband Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne. The extreme discontent, so justly felt against her father, M. de Savoie, had not made the slightest alteration in their tenderness for her. The King, who hid nothing from her, who worked with his ministers in her presence whenever she liked to enter, took care not to say a word in her hearing against her father. In private, she clasped the king round the neck at all hours, jumped upon his knees, tormented him with all sorts of sportiveness, rummaged among

his papers, opened his letters and read them in his presence, sometimes in spite of him; and acted in the same manner with Madame de Maintenon. Despite this extreme liberty, she never spoke against any one: gracious to all, she endeavoured to ward off blows from all whenever she could; was attentive to the private comforts of the King, even the humblest: kind to all who served her, and living with her ladies as with friends, in complete liberty, old and young; she was the darling of the Court, adored by all; everybody, great and small, was anxious to please her; everybody missed her when she was away; when she re-appeared the void was filled up; in a word, she had attached all hearts to her: but while in this brilliant situation she lost her own.

Nangis, now a very common-place Maréchal of France, was at that time in full bloom. He had an agreeable, but not an uncommon face; was well made, without anything marvellous; and had been educated in intrigue by the Maréchale de Rochefort, his grandmother, and Madame de Blansac, his mother, who were skilled mistresses of that art. Early introduced by them into the great world, of which they were, so to speak, the centre, he had no talent but that of pleasing women, of speaking their language, and of monopolising the most desirable by a discretion beyond his years, and which did not belong to his time. Nobody was more in vogue than he. He had had the command of a regiment when he was quite a child. He had shown firmness, application, and brilliant valour in war, that the ladies had made the most of, and they sufficed at

his age; he was of the Court of Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne, about the same age, and well treated by him.

The Duc de Bourgogne, passionately in love with his wife, was not so well made as Nangis; but the Princesse reciprocated his ardour so perfectly that up to his death he never suspected that her glances had wandered to any one else. They fell, however, upon Nangis, and soon redoubled. Nangis was not ungrateful, but he feared the thunderbolt; and his heart, too, was already engaged. Madame de La Vrillière who, without beauty, was pretty and grateful as Love, had made this conquest. She was, as I have said, daughter of Madame de Mailly, dame d'Atours of Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne; and was always near her. Jealousy soon enlightened her as to what was taking place. Far from yielding her conquest to the Duchesse, she made a point of preserving it, of disputing its possession, and carrying it off. This struggle threw Nangis into a terrible embarrassment. He feared the fury of Madame de La Vrillière, who affected to be more ready to break out than in reality she was. Besides his love for her, he feared the result of an outburst, and already saw his fortune lost. On the other hand any reserve of his towards the Duchesse, who had so much power in her hands—and seemed destined to have more—and who he knew was not likely to suffer a rival—might, he felt, be his ruin. This perplexity, for those who were aware of it, gave rise to continual scenes. I was then a constant visitor of Madame de Blansac, at Paris, and of the

Maréchale de Rochefort, at Versailles; and, through them and several other ladies of the Court, with whom I was intimate, I learnt, day by day, everything that passed. In addition to the fact that nothing diverted me more, the results of this affair might be great; and it was my especial ambition to be well informed of everything. At length all members of the Court who were assiduous and enlightened, understood the state of affairs; but either through fear or from love to the Duchesse, the whole Court was silent, saw everything, whispered discreetly, and actually kept the secret that was not entrusted to it. The struggle between the two ladies, not without bitterness, and sometimes insolence on the part of Madame de la Vrillière, nor without suffering and displeasure gently manifested on the part of Madame de Bourgogne, was for a long time a singular sight.

Whether Nangis, too faithful to his first love, needed some grains of jealousy to excite him, or whether things fell out naturally, it happened that he found a rival. Maulevrier, son of a brother of Colbert who had died of grief at not being named Maréchal of France, was this rival. He had married a daughter of the Maréchal de Tessé, and was not very agreeable in appearance,—his face, indeed, was very commonplace. He was by no means framed for gallantry; but he had wit, and a mind fertile in intrigues, with a measureless ambition that was sometimes pushed to madness. His wife was pretty, not clever, quarrelsome, and under a virginal appearance, mischievous to the last degree. As daughter of a man for whom

Madame de Bourgogne had much gratitude for the part he had taken in negociating her marriage, and the peace of Savoy, she was easily enabled to make her way at Court, and her husband with her. He soon sniffed what was passing in respect to Nangis, and obtained means of access to Madame de Bourgogne, through the influence of his father-in-law; was assiduous in his attentions; and at length, excited by example, dared to sigh. Tired of not being understood, he ventured to write. It is pretended that he sent his letters through one of the Court ladies, who thought they came from Tessé, delivered them, and handed him back the answers, as though for delivery by him. I will not add what more was believed. I will simply say that this affair was as soon perceived as had been the other, and was treated with the same silence.

Under pretext of friendship, Madame de Bourgogne went more than once—on account of the speedy departure of her husband (for the army), attended sometimes by La Maintenon,—to the house of Madame de Maulevrier, to weep with her. The Court smiled. Whether the tears were for Madame de Maulevrier or for Nangis, was doubtful. But Nangis, nevertheless, aroused by this rivalry, threw Madame de la Vrillière into terrible grief, and into a humour over which she was not mistress.

This tocsin made itself heard by Maulevrier. What will not a man think of doing when possessed to excess by love or ambition? He pretended to have something the matter with his chest, put himself on a milk diet, made believe that he had lost his voice, and was

sufficiently master of himself to refrain from uttering an intelligible word during a whole year; by these means evading the campaign and remaining at the Court. He was mad enough to relate this project, and many others, to his friend the Duc de Lorges, from whom, in turn, I learnt it. The fact was, that bringing himself thus to the necessity of never speaking to anybody except in their ear, he had the liberty of speaking low to Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne before all the Court without impropriety and without suspicion. In this manner he said to her whatever he wished day by day, and was never overheard. He also contrived to say things, the short answers to which were equally unheard. He so accustomed people to this manner of speaking that they took no more notice of it than was expressed in pity for such a sad state; but it happened that those who approached the nearest to Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne when Maulevrier was at her side, soon knew enough not to be eager to draw near her again when she was thus situated. This trick lasted more than a year: his conversation was principally composed of reproaches—but reproaches rarely succeed in love. Maulevrier, judging by the ill-humour of Madame de la Vrillière, believed Nangis to be happy. Jealousy and rage transported him at last to the extremity of folly.

One day as Madame de Bourgogne was coming from mass, and he knew that Dangeau, her chevalier d'honneur, was absent, he gave his hand. The attendants had accustomed themselves to let him have this honour, on account of his extinguished voice, so as to allow him to speak by the way, and retired respectfully

so as not to hear what he said. The ladies always followed far behind, so that, in the midst of all the Court, he had, from the chapel to the apartments of Madame de Bourgogne, the full advantages of a private interview—advantages that he had availed himself of several times. On this day he railed against Nangis to Madame de Bourgogne, called him by all sorts of names, threatened to tell everything to the King and to Madame de Maintenon, and to the Duc de Bourgogne, squeezed her fingers as if he would break them, and led her in this manner, like a madman as he was, to her apartments. Upon entering them she was ready to swoon. Trembling all over she entered her wardrobe, called one of her favourite ladies, Madame de Nogaret, to her, related what had occurred, saying, she knew not how she had reached her rooms, or how it was she had not sunk beneath the floor, or died. She had never been so dismayed. The same day Madame de Nogaret related this to Madame de Saint Simon and to me, in the strictest confidence. She counselled the Duchesse to behave gently with such a dangerous madman, and to avoid committing herself in any way with him. The worst was, that after this he threatened and said many things against Nangis, as a man with whom he was deeply offended, and whom he meant to call to account. Although he gave no reason for this, the reason was only too evident. The fear of Madame de Bourgogne at this may be imagined, and also that of Nangis. He was brave and cared for nobody; but to be mixed up in such an affair as this made him quake with fright. He beheld his fortune and his

happiness in the hands of a furious madman. He shunned Maulevrier from that time as much as possible, showed himself but little, and held his peace.

For six weeks Madame de Bourgogne lived in the most measured manner, and in mortal tremors of fear, without however anything happening. I know not who warned Tessé of what was going on. But when he learnt it he acted like a man of ability. He persuaded his son-in-law, Maulevrier, to follow him to Spain, as to a place were his fortune was assured to him. He spoke to Fagon who saw all and knew all. He understood matters in a moment, and at once said, that as so many remedies had been tried ineffectually for Maulevrier, he must go to a warmer climate, as a winter in France would inevitably kill him. It was then as a remedy, and as people go to the waters, that he went to Spain. The King and all the Court believed this, and neither the King nor Madame de Maintenon offered any objections. As soon as Tessé knew this he hurried his son-in-law out of the realm, and so put a stop to his follies and the mortal fear they had caused. To finish this adventure at once, although it will lead me far beyond the date of other matters to be spoken of after, let me say what became of Maulevrier after this point of the narrative.

He went first to Spain with Tessé. On the way they had an interview with Madame des Ursins, and succeeded in gaining her favour so completely, that, upon arriving at Madrid, the King and Queen of Spain, informed of this, welcomed them with much cordiality. Maulevrier soon became a great favourite with the

Queen of Spain. It has been said that he wished to please her, and that he succeeded. At all events he often had long interviews with her in private, and these made people think and talk.

Maulevrier began to believe it time to reap after having so well sown. He counted upon nothing less than being made grandee of Spain, and he would have obtained this favour but for his indiscretion. News of what was in store for him was noised abroad. The Duc de Grammont, then our ambassador at Madrid, wrote word to the King of the rumours that were in circulation of Maulevrier's audacious conduct towards the Queen of Spain, and of the reward it was to meet with. The King at once sent a very strong letter to the King of Spain about Maulevrier, who, by the same courier, was prohibited from accepting any favour that might be offered him. He was ordered at the same time to join Tessé at Gibraltar. He had already done so at the instance of Tessé himself; so the courier went from Madrid to Gibraltar to find him. His rage and vexation upon seeing himself deprived of the recompense he had considered certain were very great. But they yielded in time to the hopes he formed of success, and he determined to set off for Madrid and thence to Versailles. His father-in-law tried to retain him at the siege, but in vain. His representations and his authority were alike useless. Maulevrier hoped to gain over the King and Queen of Spain so completely, that our King would be forced, as it were, to range himself on their side; but the Duc de Grammont at once wrote word that Maulevrier had left the siege of

Gibraltar and returned to Madrid. This disobedience was at once chastised. A courier was immediately despatched to Maulevrier, commanding him to set out for France. He took leave of the King and Queen of Spain like a man without hope, and left Spain. The most remarkable thing is, that upon arriving at Paris, and finding the Court at Marly, and his wife there also, he asked permission to go too, the husbands being allowed by right to accompany their wives there, and the King, to avoid a disturbance did not refuse him.

At first everything seemed to smile upon Maulevrier. He had, as I have said, made friends with Madame des Ursins when he was on the road to Spain. He had done so chiefly by vaunting his intimacy with Madame de Bourgogne, and by showing to Madame des Ursins that he was in many of the secrets of the Court. Accordingly upon his return, she took him by the hand and showed a disposition towards him which could not fail to reinstate him in favour. She spoke well of him to Madame de Maintenon, who, always much smitten with new friends, received him well, and often had conversations with him which lasted more than three hours. Madame de Maintenon mentioned him to the King, and Maulevrier, who had returned out of all hope, now saw himself in a more favourable position than ever.

But the old cause of trouble still existed, and with fresh complications. Nangis was still in favour, and his appearance made Maulevrier miserable. There was a new rival too in the field, the Abbé de Polignac.

Pleasing, nay most fascinating in manner, the Abbé was a man to gain all hearts. He stopped at no flattery to succeed in this. One day when following the King through the gardens of Marly, it came on to rain. The King considerately noticed the Abbé's dress, little calculated to keep off rain. "It is no matter, Sire," said de Polignac, "the rain of Marly does not wet." People laughed much at this, and these words were a standing reproach to the soft spoken Abbé.

One of the means by which the Abbé gained the favour of the King was by being the lover of Madame du Maine. His success at length was great in every direction. He even envied the situations of Nangis and Maulevrier; and sought to participate in the same happiness. He took the same road. Madame d'O. and the Maréchale de Cœuvres became his friends. He sought to be heard, and *was* heard. At last he faced the danger of the Swiss, and on fine nights was seen with the Duchesse in the gardens. Nangis diminished in favour. Maulevrier on his return increased in fury. The Abbé met with the same fate as they: everything was perceived: people talked about the matter in whispers, but silence was kept. This triumph, in spite of his age, did not satisfy the Abbé: he aimed at something more solid. He wished to arrive at the cardinalship, and to further his views he thought it advisable to ingratiate himself into the favour of Monsieur de Bourgogne. He sought introduction to them through friends of mine, whom I warned against him as a man without scruple, and intent only upon advancing himself. My warnings

were in vain. My friends would not heed me, and the Abbé de Polignac succeeded in gaining the confidence of Monsieur de Bourgogne, as well as the favour of Madame de Bourgogne.

Maulevrier had thus two sources of annoyance—the Abbé de Polignac and Nangis. Of the latter he showed himself so jealous, that Madame de Maulevrier, out of pique, made advances to him. Nangis, to screen himself the better, replied to her. Maulevrier perceived this. He knew his wife to be sufficiently wicked to make him fear her. So many troubles of heart and brain transported him. He lost his head.

One day the Maréchale de Cœuvres came to see him, apparently on some message of reconciliation. He shut the door upon her; barricaded her within, and through the door quarrelled with her, even to abuse, for an hour, during which she had the patience to remain there without being able to see him. After this he went rarely to Court, but generally kept himself shut up at home.

Sometimes he would go out all alone at the strangest hours, take a fiacre and drive away to the back of the Chartreux or to other remote spots. Alighting there, he would whistle, and a grey-headed old man would advance and give him a packet, or one would be thrown to him from a window, or he would pick up a box filled with despatches, hidden behind a post. I heard of these mysterious doings from people to whom he was vain and indiscreet enough to boast of them. He continually wrote letters to Madame de Bourgogne, and to Madame de Maintenon, but more frequently to the former.

Madame Cantin was their agent; and I know people who have seen letters of hers in which she assured Maulevrier, in the strongest terms, that he might ever reckon on the Duchesse.

He made a last journey to Versailles, where he saw his mistress in private, and quarrelled with her cruelly. After dining with Torcy he returned to Paris. There, torn by a thousand storms of love, of jealousy, of ambition, his head was so troubled that doctors were obliged to be called in, and he was forbidden to see only the most indispensable persons, and those at at the hours when he was least ill. A hundred visions passed through his brain. Now like a madman he would speak only of Spain, of Madame de Bourgogne, of Nangis, whom he wished to kill or to have assassinated; now full of remorse towards M. de Bourgogne, he made reflections so curious to hear, that no one dared to remain with him, and he was left alone. At other times, recalling his early days, he had nothing but ideas of retreat and penitence. Then a confession was necessary in order to banish his despair as to the mercy of God. Often he thought himself very ill and upon the point of death.

The world, however, and even his nearest friends, persuaded themselves that he was only playing a part; and hoping to put an end to it, they declared to him that he passed for mad in society, and that it behoved him to rise out of such a strange state and show himself. This was the last blow, and it overwhelmed him. Furious at finding that this opinion was ruining all the designs of his ambition, he delivered himself up to

despair. Although watched with extreme care by his wife, by particular friends, and by his servants, he took his measures so well, that on the Good Friday of the year 1706, at about eight o'clock in the morning, he slipped away from them all, entered a passage behind his room, opened the window, threw himself into the court below, and dashed out his brains upon the pavement. Such was the end of an ambitious man, who, by his wild and dangerous passions, lost his wits, and then his life, a tragic victim of himself.

Madame de Bourgogne learnt the news at night. In public she showed no emotion, but in private some tears escaped her. They might have been of pity, but were not so charitably interpreted. Soon after, it was noticed that Madame de Maintenon seemed embarrassed and harsh towards Madame de Bourgogne. It was no longer doubted that Madame de Maintenon had heard the whole story. She often had long interviews with Madame de Bourgogne, who always left them in tears. Her sadness grew so much, and her eyes were so often red, that M. de Bourgogne at last became alarmed. But he had no suspicion of the truth, and was easily satisfied with the explanation he received. Madame de Bourgogne felt the necessity, however, of appearing gayer, and showed herself so. As for the Abbé de Polignac, it was felt that that dangerous person was best away. He received therefore a post which called him away, as it were, into exile; and though he delayed his departure as long as possible, was at length obliged to go. Madame de Bourgogne took leave of him in a manner that showed

how much she was affected. Some rather insolent verses were written upon this event; and were found written on a balustrade by Madame, who was not discreet enough or good enough to forget them. But they made little noise; everybody loved Madame de Bourgogne, and hid these verses as much as possible.

CHAPTER IV.

Death of M. De Duras—Selfishness of the King—Anecdote of Puysieux—Character of Pontchartrain—Why he ruined the French Fleet—Madame des Ursins at last resolves to return to Spain—Favours heaped upon her—M. de Lauzun at the army—His *bon mot*—Conduct of M. de Vendôme—Disgrace and Character of the Grand Prieur.

At the beginning of October, news reached the Court, which was at Fontainebleau, that M. de Duras was at the point of death. Upon hearing this, Madame de Saint Simon and Madame de Lauzun, who were both related to M. de Duras, wished to absent themselves from the Court performances that were to take place in the palace that evening. They expressed this wish to Madame de Bourgogne, who approved of it, but said she was afraid the King would not do the same. He had been very angry lately because the ladies had neglected to go full dressed to the Court performances. A few words he had spoken made everybody take good care not to rouse his anger on this point again. He expected so much accordingly from everybody who attended the Court, that Madame de Bourgogne was afraid he would not consent to dispense with the attendance of Madame de Saint Simon and Madame de Lauzun on this occasion. They compromised the matter, therefore, by dressing themselves, going to the room where the performance was held, and, under pretext of not finding places,

going away; Madame de Bourgogne agreeing to explain their absence in this way to the King. I notice this very insignificant bagatelle to show how the King thought only of himself, and how much he wished to be obeyed; and that that which would not have been pardoned to the nieces of a dying man, except at the Court, was a duty there, and one which it needed great address to escape from, without seriously infringing the etiquette established.

After the return of the Court from Fontainebleau this year, Puysieux came back from Switzerland, having been sent there as ambassador. Puysieux was a little fat man, very agreeable, pleasant, and witty, one of the best fellows in the world, in fact. As he had much wit, and thoroughly knew the King, he bethought himself of making the best of his position; and as his Majesty testified much friendship for him on his return, and declared himself satisfied with his mission in Switzerland, Puysieux asked if what he heard was not mere compliment, and whether he could count upon it. As the King assured him that he might do so, Puysieux assumed a brisk air, and said that he was not so sure of that, and that he was not pleased with his Majesty.

"And why not?" said the King.

"Why not?" replied Puysieux; "why, because although the most honest man in your realm, you have not kept to a promise you made me more than fifty years ago."

"What promise?" asked the King.

"What promise, Sire?" said Puysieux; "you have a

good memory, you cannot have forgotten it. Does not your Majesty remember that one day, having the honour to play at blind-man's buff with you at my grandmother's, you put your *cordon bleu* on my back, the better to hide yourself; and that when, after the game, I restored it to you, you promised to give it me when you became master; you have long been so, thoroughly master, and nevertheless that *cordon bleu* is still to come."

The King, who recollected the circumstance, here burst out laughing, and told Puysieux he was in the right, and that a chapter should be held on the first day of the new year expressly for the purpose of receiving him into the order. And so in fact it was, and Puysieux received the cordon bleu on the day the King had named. This fact is not important, but it is amusing. It is altogether singular in connection with a prince as serious and as imposing as Louis XIV.; and it is one of those little Court anecdotes which are curious.

Here is another more important fact, the consequences of which are still felt by the State. Pontchartrain, Secretary of State for the Navy, was the plague of it, as of all those who were under his cruel dependence. He was a man who, with some amount of ability, was disagreeable and pedantic to an excess; who loved evil for its own sake; who was jealous even of his father; who was a cruel tyrant towards his wife, a woman all docility and goodness; who was in one word a monster, whom the King kept in office only because he feared him. An admiral was the abhorrence of Pontchartrain, and an admiral who was an

illegitimate son of the King, he loathed. There was nothing, therefore, that he had not done during the war to thwart the Comte de Toulouse; he laid some obstacles everywhere in his path; he had tried to keep him out of the command of the fleet, and failing this, had done everything to render the fleet useless.

These were bold strokes against a person the King so much loved, but Pontchartrain knew the weak side of the King; he knew how to balance the father against the master, to bring forward the admiral and set aside the son. In this manner the Secretary of State was able to put obstacles in the way of the Comte de Toulouse that threw him almost into despair, and the Count could do little to defend himself. It was a well-known fact at sea and in the ports where the ships touched, and it angered all the fleet. Pontchartrain accordingly was abhorred there, while the Comte de Toulouse, by his amiability and other good qualities, was adored. At last, the annoyance he caused became so unendurable, that the Comte de Toulouse, at the end of his cruise in the Mediterranean, returned to Court and determined to expose the doings of Pontchartrain to the King.

The very day he had made up his mind to do this, and just before he intended to have his interview with the King, Madame Pontchartrain, casting aside her natural timidity and modesty, came to him, and with tears in her eyes begged him not to bring about the ruin of her husband. The Comte de Toulouse was softened. He admitted afterwards that he could not resist the sweetness and sorrow of Madame de Pontchartrain, and

that all his resolutions, his weapons, fell from his hands at the thought of the sorrow which the poor woman would undergo, after the fall of her brutal husband, left entirely in the hands of such a furious Cyclops. In this manner Pontchartrain was saved, but it cost dear to the state. The fear he was in of succumbing under the glory or under the vengeance of an admiral, who was son of the King, determined him to ruin the fleet itself, so as to render it incapable of receiving the admiral again. He determined to do this, and kept to his word, as was afterwards only too clearly verified by the facts. The Comte de Toulouse saw no more either ports or vessels, and from that time only very feeble squadrons went out, and even those very seldom. Pontchartrain had the impudence to boast of this before my face.

When I last spoke of Madame des Ursins, I described her as living in the midst of the Court, flattered and caressed by all, and on the highest terms of favour with the King and Madame de Maintenon. She found her position, indeed, so far above her hopes, that she began to waver in her intention of returning to Spain. The age and the health of Madame de Maintenon tempted her. She would have preferred to govern here rather than in Spain. Flattered by the attentions paid her, she thought those attentions, or, I may say, rather those servile adorations, would continue for ever, and that in time she might arrive at the highest point of power. The Archbishop of Aix and her brother divined her thoughts, for she did not dare to avow them, and showed her in the clearest way that those

thoughts were calculated to lead her astray. They explained to her that the only interest Madame de Maintenon had in favouring her was on account of Spain. Madame des Ursins once back in that country, Madame de Maintenon looked forward to a recommencement of those relations which had formerly existed between them, by which the government of Spain in appearance, if not in reality, passed through her hands. They therefore advised Madame des Ursins on no account to think of remaining in France, at the same time suggesting that it would not be amiss to stop there long enough to cause some inquietude to Madame de Maintenon, so as to gain as much advantage as possible from it.

The solidity of these reasons persuaded Madame des Ursins to follow the advice given her. She resolved to depart, but not until after a delay of which she meant to profit to the utmost. We shall soon see what success attended her schemes. The terms upon which I stood with her enabled me to have knowledge of all the sentiments that had passed through her mind:—her extreme desire, upon arriving in Paris, to return to Spain; the intoxication which seized her in consequence of the treatment she received, and which made her balance this desire; and her final resolution. It was not until afterwards, however, that I learnt all the details I have just related.

It was not long before Madame de Maintenon began to feel impatient at the long delayed departure of Madame des Ursins. She spoke at last upon the subject, and pressed Madame des Ursins to set out for

Spain. This was just what the other wanted. She said that as she had been driven out of Spain like a criminal, she must go back with honour, if Madame de Maintenon wished her to gain the confidence and esteem of the Spaniards. That although she had been treated by the King with every consideration and goodness, many people in Spain were, and would be, ignorant of it, and that, therefore, her return to favour ought to be made known in as public and convincing a manner as was her disgrace. This was said with all that eloquence and persuasiveness for which Madame des Ursins was remarkable. The effect of it exceeded her hopes.

The favours she obtained were prodigious. Twenty thousand livres by way of annual pension, and thirty thousand for her journey. One of her brothers, M. de Noirmoutiers, blind since the age of eighteen or twenty, was made hereditary duke; another, the Abbé de la Trémoille, of exceeding bad life, and much despised in Rome where he lived, was made cardinal. What a success was this! How many obstacles had to be overcome in order to attain it? Yet this was what Madame des Ursins obtained, so anxious was Madame de Maintenon to get rid of her and to send her to reign in Spain, that she might reign there herself. Pleased and loaded with favour as never subject was before, Madame des Ursins set out towards the middle of July, and was nearly a month on the road. It may be imagined what sort of a reception awaited her in Spain. The King and the Queen went a day's journey out of Madrid to meet her. Here then we see again at the height of power this

woman, whose fall the King but a short time since had so ardently desired, and whose separation from the King and Queen of Spain he had applauded himself for bringing about with so much tact. What a change in a few months!

The war continued this year, but without bringing any great success to our arms. Villars, at Circk, outmanœuvred Marlborough in a manner that would have done credit to the greatest general. Marlborough, compelled to change the plan of campaign he had determined on, returned into Flanders, where the Maréchal de Villeroy was stationed with his forces. Nothing of importance occurred during the campaign, and the two armies went into winter quarters at the end of October.

I cannot quit Flanders without relating another instance of the pleasant malignity of M. de Lauzun. In marrying a daughter of the Maréchal de Lorges, he had hoped, as I have already said, to return into the confidence of the King by means of the Maréchal, and so be again entrusted with military command. Finding these hopes frustrated, he thought of another means of reinstating himself in favour. He determined to go to the waters of Aix-la-Chapelle, not, as may be believed, for his health, but in order to ingratiate himself with the important foreigners whom he thought to find there, learn some of the enemy's plans, and come back with an account of them to the King, who would, no doubt, reward him for his zeal. But he was deceived in his calculation. Aix-la-Chapelle, generally so full of foreigners of rank, was this year, owing to the war,

almost empty. M. de Lauzun found, therefore, nobody of consequence from whom he could obtain any useful information. Before his return, he visited the Maréchal de Villeroy, who received him with all military honours, and conducted him all over the army, pointing out to him the enemy's posts; for the two armies were then quite close to each other. His extreme anxiety, however to get information, and the multitude of his questions, irritated the officers who were ordered to do the honours to him; and, in going about, they actually, at their own risk, exposed him often to be shot or taken. They did not know that his courage was extreme; and were quite taken aback by his calmness, and his evident readiness to push on even farther than they chose to venture.

On returning to Court, M. de Lauzun was of course pressed by everybody to relate all he knew of the position of the two armies. But he held himself aloof from all questioners, and would not answer. On the day after his arrival he went to pay his court to Monseigneur, who did not like him, but who also was no friend to the Maréchal de Villeroy. Monseigneur put many questions to him upon the situation of the two armies, and upon the reasons which had prevented them from engaging one another. M. de Lauzun shirked reply, like a man who wished to be pressed; did not deny that he had well inspected the position of the two armies, but instead of answering Monseigneur, dwelt upon the beauty of our troops, their gaiety at finding themselves so near an enemy, and their eagerness to fight. Pushed at last to the point at which he wished to arrive, "I will tell you, Monseigneur," said he,

"since you absolutely command me; I scanned most minutely the front of the two armies to the right and to the left, and all the ground between them. It is true, there is no brook, and that I saw; neither are there any ravines, nor hollow roads ascending or descending; but it is true that there were other hindrances which I particularly remarked."

"But what hindrance could there be," said Monseigneur, "since there was nothing between the two armies?"

M. de Lauzun allowed himself to be pressed upon this point, constantly repeating the list of hindrances that did not exist, but keeping silent upon the others. At last, driven into a corner, he took his snuff-box from his pocket.

"You see," said he, to Monseigneur, "there is one thing which much embarrasses the feet, the furze that grows upon the ground, where M. le Maréchal de Villeroy is encamped. The furze, it is true, is not mixed with any other plant, either hard or thorny; but it is a high furze, as high, as high, let me see, what shall I say?"—and he looked all around to find some object of comparison,—"as high, I assure you, as this snuff-box!"

Monseigneur burst out laughing at this sally, and all the company followed his example, in the midst of which, M. de Lauzun turned on his heel and left the room. His joke soon spread all over the Court and the town, and in the evening was told to the King. This was all the thanks M. de Villeroy obtained from M. de Lauzun for the honours he had paid him; and this

was M. de Lauzun's consolation for his ill success at Aix-la-Chapelle.

In Italy, our armies were not more successful than elsewhere. From time to time, M. de Vendôme attacked some unimportant post, and having carried it, despatched couriers to the King, magnifying the importance of the exploit. But the fact was, all these successes led to nothing. On one occasion, at Cassano, M. de Vendôme was so vigorously attacked by Prince Louis of Baden, that in spite of his contempt and his audacity, he gave himself up for lost. When danger was most imminent, instead of remaining at his post, he retired from the field of battle to a distant country-house, and began to consider how a retreat might be managed. The Grand Prieur, his brother, was in command under him, and was ordered to remain upon the field; but he was more intent upon saving his skin than of obeying orders, and so, at the very outset of the fight, ran away to a country-house hard by. M. de Vendôme strangely enough had sat down to eat at the country-house whither he had retired, and was in the midst of his meal when news was brought him, that owing to the prodigies performed by one of his officers, Le Guerchois, the fortunes of the day had changed, and Prince Louis of Baden was retiring. M. Vendôme had great difficulty to believe this, but ordered his horse, mounted, and, pushing on, concluded the combat gloriously. He did not fail, of course, to claim all the honours of this victory, which in reality was a barren one; and sent word of his triumph to the King. He dared to say

that the loss of the enemy was more than thirteen thousand; and our loss less than three thousand—whereas, the loss was at least equal. This exploit, nevertheless, resounded at the Court, and through the town as an advantage the most complete and the most decisive, and due entirely to the vigilance, valour, and capacity of Vendôme. Not a word was said of his country-house, or the interrupted meal. These facts were only known after the return of the general officers. As for the Grand Prieur, his poltroonery had been so public, his flight so disgraceful—for he had taken troops with him to protect the country-house in which he sought shelter—that he could not be pardoned. The two brothers quarrelled upon these points, and in the end the Grand Prieur was obliged to give up his command. He retired to his house at Clichy, near Paris; but, tiring of that place, he went to Rome, made the acquaintance there of the Marquise de Richelieu, a wanderer like himself, and passed some time with her at Genoa. Leaving that city, he went to Chalons-upon-Saône, which had been fixed upon as the place of his exile, and there gave himself up to the debaucheries in which he usually lived. From this time until the Regency we shall see nothing more of him. I shall only add, therefore, that he never went sober to bed during thirty years, but was always carried thither dead drunk: was a liar, swindler, and thief; a rogue to the marrow of his bones, rotted with vile diseases; the most contemptible and yet most dangerous fellow in the world.

CHAPTER V.

A Hunting Adventure—Story and Catastrophe of Fargues—Death and Character of Ninon de l'Enclos—Odd Adventure of Courtenvaux—Spies at Court—New enlistment—Wretched state of the Country—Balls at Marly.

Two very different persons died towards the latter part of this year. The first was Lamoignon, Chief President, the second, Ninon, known by the name of Mademoiselle de l'Enclos. Of Lamoignon I will relate a single anecdote, curious and instructive, which will show the corruption of which he was capable.

One day,—I am speaking of a time many years previous to the date of the occurrences just related,—one day there was a great hunting party at Saint Germain. The chase was pursued so long, that the King gave up, and returned to Saint Germain. A number of courtiers, among whom was M. de Lauzun, who related this story to me, continued their sport; and just as darkness was coming on, discovered that they had lost their way. After a time, they espied a light, by which they guided their steps, and at length reached the door of a kind of castle. They knocked, they called aloud, they named themselves, and asked for hospitality. It was then between ten and eleven at night, and towards the end of autumn. The door was

opened to them. The master of the house came forth. He made them take their boots off, and warm themselves; he put their horses into his stables; and at the same time had a supper prepared for his guests, who stood much in need of it. They did not wait long for the meal; yet when served it proved excellent; the wines served with it, too, were of several kinds, and excellent likewise: as for the master of the house, he was so polite and respectful, yet without being ceremonious or eager, that it was evident he had frequented the best company. The courtiers soon learnt that his name was Fargues, that the place was called Courson, and that he had lived there in retirement several years. After having supped, Fargues showed each of them into separate bed-rooms, where they were waited upon by his valets with every proper attention. In the morning, as soon as the courtiers had dressed themselves, they found an excellent breakfast awaiting them; and upon leaving the table they saw their horses ready for them, and as thoroughly attended to as they had been themselves. Charmed with the politeness and with the manners of Fargues, and touched by his hospitable reception of them, they made him many offers of service, and made their way back to Saint Germain. Their non-appearance on the previous night had been the common talk, their return and the adventure they had met with was no less so.

These gentlemen were then the very flower of the Court, and all of them very intimate with the King. They related to him, therefore, their story, the manner of their reception, and highly praised the master of the

house and his good cheer. The King asked his name, and, as soon as he heard it, exclaimed, "What, Fargues! is he so near here, then?" The courtiers redoubled their praises, and the King said no more; but soon after went to the Queen-mother, and told her what had happened.

Fargues, indeed, was no stranger, either to her or to the King. He had taken a prominent part in the movements of Paris against the Court and Cardinal Mazarin. If he had not been hanged, it was because he was well supported by his party, who had him included in the amnesty granted to those who had been engaged in these troubles. Fearing, however, that the hatred of his enemies might place his life in danger if he remained in Paris, he retired from the capital to this country-house which has just been mentioned, where he continued to live in strict privacy, even when the death of Cardinal Mazarin seemed to render such seclusion no longer necessary.

The King and the Queen-mother, who had pardoned Fargues in spite of themselves, were much annoyed at finding that he was living in opulence and tranquillity so near the Court; thought him extremely bold to do so; and determined to punish him for this and for his former insolence. They directed Lamoignon, therefore, to find out something in the past life of Fargues for which punishment might be awarded; and Lamoignon, eager to please, and make a profit out of his eagerness, was not long in satisfying them. He made researches, and found means to complicate Fargues in a murder that had been committed in

Paris at the height of the troubles. Officers were accordingly sent to Courson, and its owner was arrested.

Fargues was much astonished when he learnt of what he was accused. He exculpated himself, nevertheless, completely; alleging, moreover, that as the murder of which he was accused had been committed during the troubles, the amnesty in which he was included effaced all memory of the deed, according to law and usage, which had never been contested until this occasion. The courtiers who had been so well treated by the unhappy man, did everything they could with the judges and the King to obtain the release of the accused. It was all in vain. Fargues was decapitated at once, and all his wealth was given by way of recompence to the Chief President Lamoignon, who had no scruple thus to enrich himself with the blood of the innocent.*

The other person who died at the same time was, as I have said, Ninon, the famous courtesan, known, since age had compelled her to quit that trade, as Mademoiselle de l'Enclos. She was a new example of the triumph of vice carried on cleverly and repaired by some virtue. The stir that she made, and still more the disorder that she caused among the highest and most brilliant youth, overcame the extreme indulgence that, not without cause, the Queen-mother

* It is necessary to observe that some of the details of this story, especially those that relate to the infamy of Lamoignon, have been denied; Fargues, too, was hanged, not decapitated; but the main fact, the initiative of the king in this murder (of the worst description, being perpetrated under the forms of law) is denied by no one.

entertained for persons whose conduct was gallant, and more than gallant, and made her send her an order to retire into a convent. But Ninon, observing that no special convent was named, said, with a great curtsey, to the officer who brought the order, that, as the option was left to her, she would choose "the convent of the Cordeliers at Paris;" which impudent joke so diverted the Queen, that she left her alone for the future. Ninon never had but one lover at a time—but her admirers were numberless—so that when wearied of one incumbent she told him so frankly, and took another. The abandoned one might groan and complain; her decree was without appeal; and this creature had acquired such an influence, that the deserted lovers never dared to revenge on the favoured one, and were too happy to remain on the footing of friend of the house. She sometimes kept faithful to one, when he pleased her very much, during an entire campaign.

Ninon had illustrious friends of all sorts, and had so much wit that she preserved them all and kept them on good terms with each other; or, at least, no quarrels ever came to light. There was an external respect and decency about everything that passed in her house, such as princesses of the highest rank have rarely been able to preserve in their intrigues.

In this way she had among her friends a selection of the best members of the Court; so that it became the fashion to be received by her, and it was useful to be so, on account of the connections that were thus formed. There was never any gambling there, nor

loud laughing, nor disputes, nor talk about religion or politics; but much and elegant wit, ancient and modern stories, news of gallantries, yet without scandal. All was delicate, light, measured; and she herself maintained the conversation by her wit and her great knowledge of facts. The respect which, strange to say, she had acquired, and the number and distinction of her friends and acquaintances, continued when her charms ceased to attract; and when propriety and fashion compelled her to use only intellectual baits. She knew all the intrigues of the old and the new court, serious and otherwise; her conversation was charming; she was disinterested, faithful, secret, safe to the last degree; and, setting aside her frailty, virtuous and full of probity. She frequently succoured her friends with money and influence; constantly did them the most important services, and very faithfully kept the secrets or the money deposits that were confided to her.

She had been intimate with Madame de Maintenon during the whole of her residence at Paris; but Madame de Maintenon, although not daring to disavow this friendship, did not like to hear her spoken about. She wrote to Ninon with amity from to time, even until her death; and Ninon in like manner, when she wanted to serve any friend in whom she took great interest, wrote to Madame de Maintenon, who did her what service she required efficaciously and with promptness. But since Madame de Maintenon came to power, they had only seen each other two or three times, and then in secret.

Ninon was remarkable for her repartees. One that

she made to the last Maréchal de Choiseul is worth repeating. The Maréchal was virtue itself, but not fond of company or blessed with much wit. One day, after a long visit he had paid her, Ninon gaped, looked at the Maréchal, and cried :—

"Oh, my lord! how many virtues you make me detest!"

A line from I know not what play. The laughter at this may be imagined. L'Enclos lived long beyond her eightieth year, always healthy, visited, respected. She gave her last years to God, and her death was the news of the day. The singularity of this personage has made me extend my observations upon her.

A short time after the death of Mademoiselle de l'Enclos, a terrible adventure happened to Courtenvaux, eldest son of M. de Louvois. Courtenvaux was commander of the Cent-Suisse, fond of obscure debauches; with a ridiculous voice, miserly, quarrelsome, though modest and respectful; and in fine a very stupid fellow. The King, more eager to know all that was passing than most people believed, although they gave him credit for not a little curiosity in this respect, had authorised Bontems to engage a number of Swiss in addition to those posted at the doors, and in the parks and gardens. These attendants had orders to stroll morning, noon, and night, along the corridors, the passages, the staircases, even into the private places, and, when it was fine, in the court-yards and gardens; and in secret to watch people, to follow them, to notice where they went, to notice who was there, to listen to all the conversation they could hear, and to make

reports of their discoveries. This was assiduously done at Versailles, at Marly, at Trianon, at Fontainebleau, and in all the places where the King was. These new attendants vexed Courtenvaux considerably, for over such new-comers he had no sort of authority. This season, at Fontainebleau, a room, which had formerly been occupied by a party of the Cent-Suisses and of the body-guard, was given up entirely to the new corps. The room was in a public passage of communication indispensable to all in the château, and in consequence, excellently well adapted for watching those who passed through it. Courtenvaux more than ever vexed by this new arrangement, regarded it as a fresh encroachment upon his authority, and flew into a violent rage with the new-comers, and railed at them in good set terms. They allowed him to fume as he would; they had their orders, and were too wise to be disturbed by his rage. The King, who heard of all this, sent at once for Courtenvaux. As soon as he appeared in the cabinet, the King called to him from the other end of the room, without giving him time to approach, and in a rage so terrible, and for him so novel, that not only Courtenvaux, but Princes, Princesses, and everybody in the chamber, trembled. Menaces that his post should be taken away from him, terms the most severe and the most unusual, rained upon Courtenvaux, who, fainting with fright, and ready to sink under the ground, had neither the time nor the means to prefer a word. The reprimand finished by the King saying, "Get out." He had scarcely the strength to obey.

The cause of this strange scene was that Courtenvaux, by the fuss he had made, had drawn the attention of the whole Court to the change effected by the King, and that, when once seen, its object was clear to all eyes. The King, who hid his spy system with the greatest care, had counted upon this change passing unperceived, and was beside himself with anger when he found it made apparent to everybody by Courtenvaux's noise. He never regained the King's favour during the rest of his life; and but for his family he would certainly have been driven away, and his office taken from him.

Let me speak now of something of more moment. The war, as I have said, still continued, but without bringing us any advantages. On the contrary, our losses in Germany and Italy by sickness, rather than by the sword, were so great that it was resolved to augment each company by five men; and, at the same time, twenty-five thousand militia were raised, thus causing great ruin and great desolation in the provinces. The King was rocked into the belief that the people were all anxious to enter this militia, and, from time to time, at Marly, specimens of those enlisted were shown to him, and their joy and eagerness to serve made much of. I have heard this often; while, at the same time, I knew from my own tenantry, and from everything that was said, that the raising of this militia carried despair everywhere, and that many people mutilated themselves in order to exempt themselves from serving. Nobody at the Court was ignorant of this. People lowered their eyes when they saw the deceit

practised upon the King, and the credulity he displayed, and afterwards whispered one to another what they thought of flattery so ruinous. Fresh regiments, too, were raised at this time, and a crowd of new colonels and staffs created, instead of giving a new battalion or a squadron additional to regiments already in existence. I saw quite plainly towards what rock we were drifting. We had met losses at Hochstedt, Gibraltar, and Barcelona; Catalonia and the neighbouring countries were in revolt; Italy yielding us nothing but miserable successes; Spain exhausted; France, failing in men and money, and with incapable generals, protected by the Court against their faults. I saw all these things so plainly that I could not avoid making reflections, or reporting them to my friends in office. I thought that it was time to finish the war before we sank still lower, and that it might be finished by giving to the Archduke what we could not defend, and making a division of the rest. My plan was to leave Philip V. possession of all Italy, except those parts which belonged to the Grand Duke, the repúblics of Venice and Genoa, and the ecclesiastical states of Naples and Sicily; our King to have Lorraine and some other slight additions of territory; and to place elsewhere the Dukes of Savoy, of Lorraine, of Parma, and of Modena. I related this plan to the Chancellor and to Chamillart, amongst others. The contrast between their replies was striking. The Chancellor, after having listened to me very attentively, said, if my plan were adopted, he would most willingly kiss my toe for joy. Chamillart with gravity replied, that the

King would not give up a single mill of all the Spanish succession. Then I felt the blindness which had fallen upon us, and how much the results of it were to be dreaded.

Nevertheless, the King, as if to mock at misfortune and to show his enemies the little uneasiness he felt, determined, at the commencement of the new year, 1706, that the Court should be gayer than ever. He announced that there would be balls at Marly every time he was there this winter, and he named those who were to dance there; and said he should be very glad to see balls given to Madame de Bourgogne at Versailles. Accordingly, many took place there, and also at Marly, and from time to time there were masquerades. One day, the King wished that everybody, even the most aged, who were at Marly, should go to the ball masqued; and, to avoid all distinction, he went there himself with a gauze robe above his habit; but such a slight disguise was for himself alone; everybody else was completely disguised. M. and Madame de Beauvilliers were there perfectly disguised. When I say *they* were there, those who knew the Court will admit that I have said more than enough. I had the pleasure of seeing them, and of quietly laughing with them. At all these balls the King made people dance who had long since passed the age for doing so. As for the Comte de Brionne and the Chevalier de Sully, their dancing was so perfect that there was no age for them.

CHAPTER VI.

Arrival of Vendôme at Court—Character of that disgusting Personage—Rise of Cardinal Alberoni—Vendôme's Reception at Marly—His unheard-of Triumph—His high Flight—Returns to Italy—Battle of Calcinato — Condition of the Army — Pique of the Maréchal de Villeroy—Battle of Ramillies—Its Consequences.

In the midst of all this gaiety, that is to say on the 12th of February, 1706, one of our generals, of whom I have often spoken, I mean M. de Vendôme, arrived at Marly. He had not quitted Italy since succeeding to Maréchal de Villeroy, after the affair of Cremona. His battles, such as they were, the places he had taken, the authority he had assumed, the reputation he had usurped, his incomprehensible successes with the King, the certainty of the support he leaned on,—all this inspired him with the desire to come and enjoy at Court a situation so brilliant, and which so far surpassed what he had a right to expect. But before speaking of the reception which was given him, and of the incredible ascendancy he took, let me paint him from the life a little more completely than I have yet done.*

Vendôme was of ordinary height, rather stout, but vigorous and active: with a very noble countenance

* It is impossible to give intact the portrait sketched by St. Simon of this disgusting personage. I have ventured as far as I could, in order to show what sort of person was required to earn all the endearments of a Great King.

and lofty mien. There was much natural grace in his carriage and words; he had a good deal of innate wit, which he had not cultivated, and spoke easily, supported by a natural boldness, which afterwards turned to the wildest audacity; he knew the world and the Court; was above all things an admirable courtier; was polite when necessary, but insolent when he dared—familiar with common people—in reality, full of the most ravenous pride. As his rank rose and his favour increased, his obstinacy and pig-headedness increased too, so that at last he would listen to no advice whatever, and was inaccessible to all, except a small number of familiars and valets. No one better than he knew the subserviency of the French character, or took more advantage of it. Little by little he accustomed his subalterns, and then from one to the other all his army, to call him nothing but "Monseigneur," and "Your Highness." In time the gangrene spread, and even lieutenant-generals and the most distinguished people did not dare to address him in any other manner.

The most wonderful thing to whoever knew the King—so gallant to the ladies during a long part of his life, so devout the other, and often importunate to make others do as he did—was that the said King had always a singular horror of the inhabitants of the Cities of the Plain; and yet M. de Vendôme, though most odiously stained with that vice—so publicly that he treated it as an ordinary gallantry—never found his favour diminish on that account. The Court, Anet, the army, knew of these abominations. Valets and subaltern officers soon found the way to promotion. I

have already mentioned how publicly he placed himself in the doctor's hands, and how basely the Court acted, imitating the King, who would never have pardoned a legitimate prince what he indulged so strangely in Vendôme.

The idleness of M. de Vendôme was equally matter of notoriety. More than once he ran the risk of being taken prisoner from mere indolence. He rarely himself saw anything at the army, trusting to his familiars when ready to trust anybody. The way he employed his day prevented any real attention to business. He was filthy in the extreme, and proud of it. Fools called it simplicity. His bed was always full of dogs and bitches, who littered at his side, the pups rolling in the clothes. He himself was under constraint in nothing. One of his theses was, that everybody resembled him, but was not honest enough to confess it as he was. He mentioned this once to the Princesse de Conti—the cleanest person in the world, and the most delicate in her cleanliness.

He rose rather late when at the army. * * * * In this situation he wrote his letters, and gave his morning orders. Whoever had business with him, general officers and distinguished persons, could speak to him then. He had accustomed the army to this infamy. At the same time he gobbled his breakfast; and whilst he ate, listened, or gave orders, many spectators always standing round * * * * (I must be excused these disgraceful details, in order better to make him known). * * * * On shaving days he used the same vessel to lather his chin in. This, according to him, was a

simplicity of manner worthy of the ancient Romans, and which condemned the splendour and superfluity of the others. When all was over, he dressed; then played high at piquet or hombre; or rode out, if it was absolutely necessary. All was now over for the day. He supped copiously with his familiars; was a great eater, of wonderful gluttony; a connoisseur in no dish, liked fish much, but the stale and stinking better than the good. The meal prolonged itself in theses and disputes, and above all in praise and flattery.

He would never have forgiven the slightest blame from any one. He wanted to pass for the first captain of his age, and spoke with indecent contempt of Prince Eugène and all the others. The faintest contradiction would have been a crime. The soldier and the subaltern adored him for his familiarity with them, and the licence he allowed in order to gain their hearts; for all which he made up by excessive haughtiness towards whoever was elevated by rank or birth.

On one occasion the Duke of Parma sent the bishop of that place to negotiate some affair with him; but M. de Vendôme took such disgusting liberties in his presence, that the ecclesiastic, though without saying a word, returned to Parma, and declared to his master that never would he undertake such an embassy again. In his place another envoy was sent, the famous Alberoni. He was the son of a gardener, who became an Abbé in order to get on. He was full of buffoonery; and pleased M. de Parma as might a valet who amused him, but he soon showed talent and capacity for affairs. The Duke thought that the night-chair of M. de

Vendôme required no other ambassador than Alberoni, who was accordingly sent to conclude what the bishop had left undone. The Abbé determined to please, and was not proud. M. de Vendôme exhibited himself as before; and Alberoni, by an infamous act of personal adoration, gained his heart. He was thenceforth much with him, made cheese-soup and other odd messes for him; and finally worked his way. It is true he was cudgelled by some one he had offended, for a thousand paces, in sight of the whole army, but this did not prevent his advancement. Vendôme liked such an unscrupulous flatterer; and yet, as we have seen, he was not in want of praise. The extraordinary favour shown him by the King—the credulity with which his accounts of victories were received—showed to every one in what direction their laudation was to be sent.

Such was the man whom the King and the whole Court hastened to caress and flatter from the first moment of his arrival amongst us. There was a terrible hubbub: boys, porters, and valets rallied round his post-chaise when he reached Marly. Scarcely had he ascended into his chamber, than everybody, princes, bastards, and all the rest, ran after him. The ministers followed: so that in a short time nobody was left in the *salon* but the ladies. M. de Beauvilliers was at Vaucresson. As for me, I remained spectator, and did not go and adore this idol.

In a few minutes Vendôme was sent for by the King and Monseigneur. As soon as he could dress himself, surrounded as he was by such a crowd, he went to the *salon*, carried by it rather than environed. Monseigneur

stopped the music that was playing, in order to embrace him. The King left the cabinet where he was at work, and came out to meet him, embracing him several times. Chamillart on the morrow gave a *fête* in his honour at L'Étang, which lasted two days. Following his example, Pontchartrain, Torcy, and the most distinguished lords of the Court did the same. People begged and entreated to give him *fêtes;* people begged and entreated to be invited to them. Never was triumph equal to his; each step he took procured him a new one. It is not too much to say, that everybody disappeared before him, princes of the blood, ministers, the grandest seigneurs, all appeared only to show how high he was above them; even the King seemed only to remain King to elevate him more.

The people joined in this enthusiasm, both in Versailles and at Paris, where he went under pretence of going to the opera. As he passed along the streets crowds collected to cheer him; they billed him at the doors, and every seat was taken in advance; people pushed and squeezed everywhere, and the price of admission was doubled, as on the nights of first performances. Vendôme, who received all these homages with extreme ease, was yet internally surprised by a folly so universal. He feared that all this heat would not last out even the short stay he intended to make. To keep himself more in reserve, he asked and obtained permission to go to Anet, in the intervals between the journeys to Marly. All the Court, however, followed him there, and the King was pleased, rather than otherwise, at seeing Versailles half deserted for Anet,

actually asking some if they had been, others, when they intended to go.

It was evident that every one had resolved to raise M. de Vendôme to the rank of a hero. He determined to profit by their resolution. If they made him Mars, why should he not act as such? He claimed to be appointed commander of the Maréchals of France, and although the King refused him this favour, he accorded him one which was but the stepping-stone to it. M. de Vendôme went away towards the middle of March to command the army in Italy, with a letter signed by the King himself, promising him that if a Maréchal of France were sent to Italy, that Maréchal was to take commands from him. M. de Vendôme was content, and determined to obtain all he asked on a future day. The disposition of the armies had been arranged just before. Tessé, for Catalonia and Spain; Berwick, for the frontier of Portugal; Maréchal Villars, for Alsace; Marsin, for the Moselle; Marechal de Villeroy, for Flanders; and M. de Vendôme, as I have said, for Italy.

Now that I am speaking of the armies, let me give here an account of all our military operations this year, so as to complete that subject at once.

M. de Vendôme commenced his Italian campaign by a victory. He attacked the troops of Prince Eugène upon the heights of Calcinato, drove them before him, killed three thousand men, took twenty standards, ten pieces of cannon, and eight thousand prisoners. It was a rout rather than a combat. The enemy was much inferior in force to us, and was without its general, Prince Eugène, he not having returned to

open the campaign. He came back, however, the day after this engagement, soon re-established order among his troops, and M. de Vendôme from that time, far from being able to recommence the attack, was obliged to keep strictly on the defensive while he remained in Italy. He did not fail to make the most of his victory, which, however, to say the truth, led to nothing.

Our armies just now were, it must be admitted, in by no means a good condition. The generals owed their promotion to favour and fantasy. The King thought he gave them capacity when he gave them their patents. Under M. de Turenne the army had afforded, as in a school, opportunities for young officers to learn the art of warfare, and to qualify themselves step by step to take command. They were promoted as they showed signs of their capacity, and gave proof of their talent. Now, however, it was very different. Promotion was granted according to length of service, thus rendering all application and diligence unnecessary, except when M. de Louvois suggested to the King such officers as he had private reasons for being favourable to, and whose actions he could control. He persuaded the King that it was he himself who ought to direct the armies from his cabinet. The King, flattered by this, swallowed the bait, and Louvois himself was thus enabled to govern in the name of the King, to keep the generals in leading-strings, and to fetter their every movement. In consequence of the way in which promotions were made, the greatest ignorance prevailed amongst all grades of officers. None knew scarcely anything more than mere routine duties, and some-

times not even so much as that. The luxury which had inundated the army too, where everybody wished to live as delicately as at Paris, hindered the general officers from associating with the other officers, and in consequence from knowing and appreciating them. As a matter of course, there were no longer any deliberations upon the state of affairs, in which the young might profit by the counsels of the old, and the army profit by the discussions of all. The young officers talked only of play and women; the old, of forage and equipages; the generals spent half their time in writing costly despatches, often useless, and sending them away by couriers. The luxury of the Court and city had spread into the army, so that delicacies were carried there unknown formerly. Nothing was spoken of but of hot dishes in the marches and in the detachments; and the repasts that were carried to the trenches, during sieges, were not only well served, but ices and fruits were partaken of as at a *fête*, and a profusion of all sorts of liqueurs. Expense ruined the officers, who vied with each other in their endeavours to appear magnificent; and the things to be carried, the work to be done, quadrupled the number of domestics and grooms, who often starved. For a long time, people had complained of all this; even those who were put to the expenses, which ruined them; but none dared to spend less. At last, that is to say, in the spring of the following year, the King made severe rules, with the object of bringing about a reform in this particular. There is no country in Europe where there are so many fine laws, or where the observance of

them is of shorter duration. It often happens, that in the first year all are infringed, and in the second, forgotten. Such was the army at this time, and we soon had abundant opportunities to note its incapacity to overcome the enemies with whom we had to contend.

The King wished to open this campaign with two battles; one in Italy, the other in Flanders. His desire was to some extent gratified in the former case; but in the other he met with a sad and cruel disappointment. Since the departure of Maréchal de Villeroy for Flanders, the King had more than once pressed him to engage the enemy. The Maréchal, piqued with these reiterated orders, which he considered as reflections upon his courage, determined to risk anything in order to satisfy the desire of the King. But the King did not wish this. At the same time that he wished for a battle in Flanders, he wished to place Villeroy in a state to fight it. He sent orders, therefore, to Marsin to take eighteen battalions and twenty squadrons of his army, to proceed to the Moselle, where he would find twenty others, and then to march with the whole into Flanders, and join Maréchal de Villeroy. At the same time he prohibited the latter from doing anything until this reinforcement reached him. Four couriers, one after the other, carried this prohibition to the Maréchal; but he had determined to give battle without assistance, and he did so, with what result will be seen.

On the 24th of May he posted himself between the villages of Taviers and Ramillies. He was superior in force to the Duke of Marlborough who was opposed

to him, and this fact gave him confidence. Yet the position which he had taken up was one which was well known to be bad. The late M. de Luxembourg had declared it so, and had avoided it. M. de Villeroy had been a witness of this, but it was his destiny and that of France that he should forget it. Before he took up this position he announced that it was his intention to do so to M. d'Orléans. M. d'Orléans said publicly to all who came to listen, that if M. de Villeroy did so he would be beaten. M. d'Orléans proved to be only too good a prophet.

Just as M. de Villeroy had taken up his position and made his arrangements, the Elector arrived in hot haste from Brussels. It was too late now to blame what had been done. There was nothing for it but to complete what had been already begun, and await the result.

It was about two hours after midday when the enemy arrived within range, and came under our fire from Ramillies. It forced them to halt until their cannon could be brought into play, which was soon done. The cannonade lasted a good hour. At the end of that time they marched to Taviers, where a part of our army was posted, found but little resistance, and made themselves masters of that place. From that moment they brought their cavalry to bear. They perceived that there was a marsh which covered our left, but which hindered our two wings from joining. They made good use of the advantage this gave them. We were taken in the rear at more than one point, and Taviers being no longer able to assist

us, Ramillies itself fell, after a prodigious fire and an obstinate resistance. The Comte de Guiche at the head of the regiment of Guards defended it for four hours, and performed prodigies, but in the end he was obliged to give way. All this time our left had been utterly useless with its nose in the marsh, no enemy in front of it, and with strict orders not to budge from its position.

Our retreat commenced in good order, but soon the night came and threw us into confusion. The defile of Judoigne became so gorged with baggage and with the wrecks of the artillery we had been able to save, that everything was taken from us there. Nevertheless, we arrived at Louvain, and then not feeling in safety, passed the canal of Wilworde without being very closely followed by the enemy.

We lost in this battle four thousand men, and many prisoners of rank, all of whom were treated with much politeness by Marlborough. Brussels was one of the first-fruits he gathered of this victory, which had such grave and important results.

The King did not learn this disaster until Wednesday, the 26th of May, at his waking. I was at Versailles. Never was such trouble or such consternation. The worst was, that only the broad fact was known; for six days we were without a courier to give us details. Even the post was stopped. Days seemed like years in the ignorance of everybody as to details, and in the inquietude of everybody for relatives and friends. The King was forced to ask one and another for news; but nobody could tell him any. Worn out at last by

the silence, he determined to despatch Chamillart to Flanders to ascertain the real state of affairs. Chamillart accordingly left Versailles on Sunday, the 30th of May, to the astonishment of all the Court, at seeing a man charged with the war and the finance department sent on such an errand. He astonished no less the army, when he arrived at Courtrai, where it had stationed itself. Having gained all the information he sought, Chamillart returned to Versailles on Friday, the 4th of June, at about eight o'clock in the evening, and at once went to the King, who was in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon. It was known then that the army, after several hasty marches, finding itself at Ghent, the Elector of Bavaria had insisted that it ought at least to remain there. A council of war was held, the Maréchal de Villeroy, who was quite discouraged by the loss he had sustained, opposed the advice of the Elector. Ghent was abandoned: so was the open country. The army was separated and distributed here and there, under the command of the general officers. In this way, with the exception of Namur, Mons, and a very few other places, all the Spanish Low Countries were lost, and a part of ours, even. Never was rapidity equal to this. The enemies were as much astonished as we.

However tranquilly the King sustained in appearance this misfortune, he felt it to the quick. He was so affected by what was said of his body-guards, that he spoke of them himself with bitterness. Court warriors testified in their favour, but persuaded nobody. But the King seized these testimonies with joy, and sent

word to the Guards that he was well contented with them. Others, however, were not so easily satisfied.

This sad reverse, and the discontent of the Elector made the King feel at last that his favourites must give way to those better able to fill their places. Villeroy who, since his defeat, had quite lost his head, and who, if he had been a general of the Empire would have lost it in reality in another manner, received several strong hints from the King that he ought to give up his command. But he either could not or would not understand them, and so tired out the King's patience, at length. But he was informed in language which admitted of no misapprehension that he must return. Even then, the King was so kindly disposed towards him, that he said the Maréchal had begged to be recalled with such obstinacy that he could not refuse him. But M. de Villeroy was absurd enough to reject this salve for his honour; which led to his disgrace. M. de Vendôme had orders to leave Italy, and succeed to the command in Flanders, where the enemies had very promptly taken Ostend and Nieuport.

CHAPTER VII.

Abandonment of the Siege of Barcelona—Affairs of Italy—La Feuillade—Disastrous Rivalries—Conduct of M. d'Orleans—The Siege of Turin Battle—Victory of Prince Eugène—Insubordination in the Army—Retreat—M. d'Orleans returns to Court—Disgrace of La Feuillade.

Meanwhile, as I have promised to relate, in a continuous narrative, all our military operations of this year, let me say what passed in other directions. The siege of Barcelona made no progress. Our engineers were so slow, and so ignorant, that they did next to nothing. They were so venal, too, that they aided the enemy rather than us by their movements. According to a new rule made by the King, whenever they changed the position of their guns, they were entitled to a pecuniary recompense. Accordingly, they passed all their time in uselessly changing about from place to place, in order to receive the recompense which thus became due to them.

Our fleet, too, hearing that a much superior naval force was coming to the assistance of the enemy, and being, thanks to Pontchartrain, utterly unable to meet it, was obliged to weigh anchor, and sailed away to Toulon. The enemy's fleet arrived, and the besieged at once took new courage. Tessé, who had joined the

siege, saw at once that it was useless to continue it. We had for sometime depended upon the open sea for supplies. Now that the English fleet had arrived, we could depend upon the sea no longer. The King of Spain saw, at last, that there was no help for it but to raise the siege.

It was raised accordingly on the night between the 10th and 11th of May, after fourteen days' bombardment. We abandoned one hundred pieces of artillery; one hundred and fifty thousand pounds of powder; thirty thousand sacks of flour; twenty thousand sacks of *sévade*, a kind of oats; and a great number of bombs, cannon-balls, and implements. As Catalonia was in revolt, it was felt that retreat could not take place in that direction; it was determined, therefore, to retire by the way of the French frontier. For eight days, however, our troops were harassed in flank and rear by Miquelets, who followed us from mountain to mountain. It was not until the Duc de Noailles, whose father had done some service to the chiefs of these Miquelets, had parleyed with them, and made terms with them, that our troops were relieved from these cruel wasps. We suffered much loss in our retreat, which, with the siege, cost us full four thousand men. The army stopped at Roussillon, and the King of Spain, escorted by two regiments of dragoons, made the best of his way to Madrid. That city was itself in danger from the Portuguese, and, indeed, fell into their hands soon after. The Queen, who, with her children, had left it in time to avoid capture, felt matters to be in such extremity, that she despatched all the jewels belonging

to herself and her husband to France. They were placed in the custody of the King. Among them was that famous pear-shaped pearl called the *Pérégrine*, which, for its weight, its form, its size, and its water, is beyond all price and all comparison.

The King of Spain effected a junction with the army of Berwick, and both set to work to reconquer the places the Portuguese had taken from them. In this they were successful. The Portuguese, much harassed by the people of Castille, were forced to abandon all they had gained; and the King of Spain was enabled to enter Madrid towards the end of September, where he was received with much rejoicing.

In Italy we experienced the most disastrous misfortunes. M. de Vendôme, having been called from the command to go into Flanders, M. d'Orleans, after some deliberation, was appointed to take his place. M. d'Orleans set out from Paris on the 1st of July, with twenty-eight horses and five chaises, to arrive in three days at Lyons, and then to hasten on into Italy. La Feuillade was besieging Turin. M. d'Orleans went to the siege. He was magnificently received by La Feuillade, and shown all over the works. He found everything defective. La Feuillade was very young, and very inexperienced. I have related an adventure of his [see Vol. I.] : that of his seizing upon the coffers of his uncle, and so forestalling his inheritance. To recover from the disgrace this occurrence brought upon him, he had married a daughter of Chamillart. Favoured by this minister, but coldly looked upon by the King, he had succeeded in obtaining command in the army,

and had been appointed to conduct this siege. Inflated by the importance of his position, and by the support of Chamillart, he would listen to no advice from any one. M. d'Orleans attempted to bring about some changes, and gave orders to that effect. But as soon as he was gone, La Feuillade countermanded those orders and had everything his own way. The siege accordingly went on with the same ill success as before.

M. d'Orleans joined M. de Vendôme on the 17th of July upon the Mincio. The pretended hero had just made some irreparable faults. He had allowed Prince Eugène to pass the Po, nearly in front of him, and nobody knew what had become of twelve of our battalions posted near the place where this passage had been made. Prince Eugène had taken all the boats that we had upon the river. We could not cross it, therefore, and follow the enemy without making a bridge. Vendôme feared lest his faults should be perceived. He wished that his successor should remain charged with them. M. d'Orleans, indeed, soon saw all the faults that M. de Vendôme had committed, and tried hard to induce the latter to aid him to repair them. But M. de Vendôme would not listen to his representations, and started away almost immediately to take the command of the army in Flanders, leaving M. d'Orleans to get out of the difficulty as he might,

M. d'Orleans, abandoned to himself (except when interfered with by Maréchal de Marsin, under whose tutelage he was), could do nothing. He found as much opposition to his plans from Marsin as he had found

from M. de Vendôme. Marsin wished to keep in the good graces of La Feuillade, son-in-law of the all-powerful minister, and would not adopt the views of M. d'Orleans. This latter had proposed to dispute the passage of the Tanaro, a confluent of the Po, with the enemy, or compel them to accept battle. An intercepted letter, in cypher, from Prince Eugène to the Emperor, which fell into our hands, proved, subsequently, that this course would have been the right one to adopt; but the proof came too late; the decyphering table having been forgotten at Versailles! M. d'Orleans had in the meantime been forced to lead his army to Turin, to assist the besiegers, instead of waiting to stop the passage of the troops that were destined for the aid of the besieged. He arrived at Turin on the 28th of August, in the evening. La Feuillade, now under two masters, grew, it might be imagined, more docile. But no! He allied himself with Marsin (without whom M. d'Orleans could do nothing), and so gained him over that they acted completely in accord. When M. d'Orleans was convinced, soon after his arrival, that the enemy was approaching to succour Turin, he suggested that they should be opposed as they attempted the passage of the Dora. But his advice was not listened to. He was displeased with everything. He found that all the orders he had given had been disregarded. He found the siege works bad, imperfect, very wet, and very ill-guarded. He tried to remedy all these defects, but he was opposed at every step. A council of war was held. M. d'Orleans stated his views, but all the officers present, with one

honourable exception, servilely chimed in with the views of Marsin and La Feuillade, and things remained as they were. M. d'Orleans, thereupon, protested that he washed his hands of all the misfortunes that might happen in consequence of his advice being neglected. He declared that as he was no longer master over anything, it was not just that he should bear any part of the blame which would entail to those in command. He asked, therefore, for his post-chaise, and wished immediately to quit the army. La Feuillade and Marsin, however, begged him to remain, and upon second thoughts he thought it better to do so. The simple reason of all this opposition was, that La Feuillade, being very young and very vain, wished to have all the honours of the siege. He was afraid that if the counsel of M. d'Orleans prevailed, some of that honour would be taken from him. This was the real reason, and to this France owes the disastrous failure of the siege of Turin.

After the council of war, M. d'Orleans ceased to take any share in the command, walked about or stopped at home, like a man who had nothing to do with what was passing around him. On the night of the 6th to the 7th of September, he rose from his bed alarmed by information sent to him in a letter, that Prince Eugène was about to attack the castle of Pianezza, in order to cross the Dora, and so proceed to attack the besiegers. He hastened at once to Marsin, showed him the letter, and recommended that troops should at once be sent to dispute the passage of a brook that the enemies had yet to cross, even supposing them to be masters of

Pianezza. Even as he was speaking, confirmation of the intelligence he had received was brought by one of our officers. But it was resolved, in the Eternal decrees, that France should be struck to the heart that day.

Marsin would listen to none of the arguments of M. d'Orleans. He maintained that it would be unsafe to leave the lines; that the news was false; that Prince Eugène could not possibly arrive so promptly; he would give no orders; and he counselled M. d'Orleans to go back to bed. The Prince, more piqued and more disgusted than ever, retired to his quarters, fully resolved to abandon everything to the blind and deaf, who would neither see nor hear.

Soon after entering his chamber the news spread from all parts of the arrival of Prince Eugène. He did not stir. Some general officers came, and forced him to mount his horse. He went forth negligently at a walking pace. What had taken place during the previous days had made so much noise that even the common soldiers were ashamed of it. They liked him, and murmured because he would no longer command them. One of them called him by his name, and asked him if he refused them his sword. This question did more than all that the general officers had been able to do. M. d'Orleans replied to the soldier, that he would not refuse to serve them, and at once resolved to lend all his aid to Marsin and La Feuillade.

But it was no longer possible to leave the lines. The enemy was in sight, and advanced so diligently, that there was no time to make arrangements. Marsin, more dead than alive, was incapable of giving any

order or any advice. But La Feuillade still persevered in his obstinacy. He disputed the orders of the Duc d'Orleans, and prevented their execution, possessed by I know not what demon.

The attack commenced about ten o'clock in the morning, was pushed with incredible vigour, and sustained, at first, in the same manner. Prince Eugène poured his troops into those places which the smallness of our forces had compelled us to leave open. Marsin, towards the middle of the battle, received a wound, which incapacitated him from further service, and was taken prisoner immediately after. La Feuillade ran about like a madman, tearing his hair, and incapable of giving any order. The Duc d'Orleans preserved his coolness, and did wonders to save the day. Finding our men beginning to waver, he called the officers by their name, aroused the soldiers by his voice, and himself led the squadrons and battalions to the charge. Vanquished at last by pain, and weakened by the blood he had lost, he was constrained to retire a little, to have his wounds dressed. He scarcely gave himself time for this, however, but returned at once where the fire was hottest. Three times the enemy had been repulsed, and their guns spiked by one of our officers, Le Guerchois, with his brigade of the old marine, when enfeebled by the losses he had sustained, he called upon a neighbouring brigade to advance with him to oppose a number of fresh battalions the enemy had sent against him. This brigade and its brigadier refused bluntly to aid him. It was positively known afterwards, that had Le Guer-

chois sustained this fourth charge, Prince Eugène would have retreated.

This was the last moment of the little order that there had been at this battle. All that followed was only trouble, confusion, disorder, flight, discomfiture. The most terrible thing is, that the general officers, with but few exceptions, more intent upon their equipage and upon what they had saved by pillage, added to the confusion instead of diminishing it, and were worse than useless.

M. d'Orleans, convinced at last that it was impossible to re-establish the day, thought only how to retire as advantageously as possible. He withdrew his light artillery, his ammunition, everything that was at the siege, even at the most advanced of its works, and attended to everything with a presence of mind that allowed nothing to escape him. Then, gathering round him all the officers he could collect, he explained to them that nothing but retreat was open to them, and that the road to Italy was that which they ought to pursue. By this means they would leave the victorious army of the enemy in a country entirely ruined and desolate, and hinder it from returning into Italy, where the army of the King, on the contrary, would have abundance, and where it would cut off all succour from the others.

This proposition dismayed to the last degree our officers, who hoped at least to reap the fruit of this disaster by returning to France with the money with which they were gorged. La Feuillade opposed it with so much impatience, that the Prince, exasperated by an effrontery so sustained, told him to hold his peace

and let others speak. Others did speak, but only one was for following the counsel of M. d'Orleans. Feeling himself now, however, the master, he stopped all further discussion, and gave orders that the retreat to Italy should commence. This was all he could do. His body and his brain were equally exhausted. After having waited some little time, he was compelled to throw himself into a post-chaise, and in that to continue the journey.

The officers obeyed his orders most unwillingly. They murmured amongst each other so loudly that the Duc d'Orleans, justly irritated by so much opposition to his will, made them hold their peace. The retreat continued. But it was decreed that the spirit of error and vertigo should ruin us and save the allies. As the army were about to cross the bridge over the Ticino, and march into Italy, information was brought to M. d'Orleans, that the enemy occupied the roads by which it was indispensable to pass. M. d'Orleans, not believing this intelligence, persisted in going forward. Our officers, thus foiled, for it was known afterwards that the story was their invention, and that the passes were entirely free, hit upon another expedient. They declared there was no more provisions or ammunition, and that it was accordingly impossible to go into Italy. M. d'Orleans, worn out by so much criminal disobedience, and weakened by his wound, could hold out no longer. He threw himself back in the chaise, and said they might go where they would. The army therefore turned about, and directed itself towards Pignerol, losing many equipages from our rear-guard during the

night in the mountains, although that rear-guard was protected by Albergotti, and was not annoyed by the enemy.

The joy of the enemy at their success was unbounded. They could scarcely believe in it. Their army was just at its last gasp. They had not more than four days' supply of powder left in the place. After the victory, M. de Savoie and Prince Eugène lost no time in idle rejoicings. They thought only how to profit by a success so unheard of and so unexpected. They retook rapidly all the places in Piedmont and Lombardy that we occupied, and we had no power to prevent them.

Never battle cost fewer soldiers than that of Turin; never was retreat more undisturbed than ours; yet never were results more frightful or more rapid. Ramillies, with a light loss, cost the Spanish Low Countries and part of ours: Turin cost all Italy by the ambition of La Feuillade, the incapacity of Marsin, the avarice, the trickery, the disobedience of the general officers opposed to M. d'Orleans. So complete was the rout of our army, that it was found impossible to restore it sufficiently to send it back to Italy, not at least before the following spring. M. d'Orleans returned therefore to Versailles, on Monday, the 8th of November, and was well received by the King. La Feuillade arrived on Monday, the 13th of December, having remained several days at Paris without daring to go to Versailles. He was taken to the King by Chamillart. As soon as the King saw them enter he rose, went to the door, and without giving them time to utter a word, said to La Feuillade, "Monsieur, we are both very unfortunate!"

and instantly turned his back upon him. La Feuillade, on the threshold of the door that he had not had time to cross, left the place immediately, without having dared to say a single word. The King always afterwards turned his eyes from La Feuillade, and would never speak to him. Such was the fall of this Phaëton. He saw that he had no more hope, and retired from the army; although there was no baseness that he did not afterwards employ to return to command. I think there never was a more wrong-headed man, or a man more radically dishonest, even to the marrow of his bones. As for Marsin, he died soon after his capture, from the effect of his wounds.*

* It may be as well to remind the reader that the Duc d'Orleans who figures in this Chapter is the same known as the Duc de Chartres in the previous volume—afterwards Regent of France.

CHAPTER VIII.

Measures of Economy—Financial Embarrassments—The King and Chamillart—Tax on Baptisms and Marriages—Vauban's Patriotism—Its Punishment—My action with M. de Brissac—I appeal to the King—The Result—I gain my Action.

SUCH was our military history of the year 1706—a history of losses and dishonour. It may be imagined in what condition was the exchequer with so many demands upon its treasures. For the last two or three years the King had been obliged, on account of the expenses of the war, and the losses we had sustained, to cut down the presents that he made at the commencement of the year. Thirty-five thousand louis in gold was the sum he ordinarily spent in this manner. This year, 1707, he diminished it by ten thousand louis. It was upon Madame de Montespan that the blow fell. Since she had quitted the Court the King gave her twelve thousand louis of gold each year. This year he sent word to her that he could only give her eight. Madame de Montespan testified not the least surprise. She replied, that she was only sorry for the poor, to whom indeed she gave with profusion. A short time after the King had made this reduction,—that is, on the 8th of January,—Madame La Duchesse de

Bourgogne gave birth to a son. The joy was great, but the King prohibited all those expenses which had been made at the birth of the first-born of Madame de Bourgogne, and which had amounted to a large sum. The want of money indeed made itself felt so much at this time, that the King was obliged to seek for resources as a private person might have done. A mining speculator, named Rodes, having pretended that he had discovered many veins of gold in the Pyrenees, assistance was given him in order that he might bring these treasures to light. He declared that with eighteen hundred workmen he would furnish a million (francs' worth of gold) each week. Fifty-two millions a-year would have been a fine increase of revenue. However, after waiting some little time, no gold was forthcoming, and the money that had been spent to assist this enterprise was found to be pure loss.

The difficulty of finding money to carry on the affairs of the nation continued to grow so irksome that Chamillart, who had both the finance and the war departments under his control, was unable to stand against the increased trouble and vexation which this state of things brought him. More than once he had represented that this double work was too much for him. But the King had in former times expressed so much annoyance from the troubles that arose between the finance and war departments, that he would not separate them, after having once joined them together. At last, Chamillart could bear up against his heavy load no longer. The vapours seized him: he had attacks of giddiness in the head; his digestion was obstructed;

he grew thin as a lath. He wrote again to the King, begging to be released from his duties, and frankly stated that, in the state he was, if some relief was not afforded him, everything would go wrong and perish. He always left a large margin to his letters, and upon this the King generally wrote his reply. Chamillart showed me this letter when it came back to him, and I saw upon it with great surprise, in the handwriting of the King, this short note: "Well! let us perish together."

The necessity for money had now become so great, that all sorts of means were adopted to obtain it. Amongst other things, a tax was established upon baptisms and marriages. This tax was extremely onerous and odious. The result of it was a strange confusion. Poor people, and many of humble means, baptised their children themselves, without carrying them to the church, and were married at home by reciprocal consent and before witnesses, when they could find no priest who would marry them without formality. In consequence of this there were no longer any baptismal extracts; no longer any certainty as to baptisms or births; and the children of the marriages solemnised in the way I have stated above were illegitimate in the eyes of the law. Researches and rigours in respect to abuses so prejudicial were redoubled therefore; that is to say, they were redoubled for the purpose of collecting the tax.

From public cries and murmurs the people in some places passed to sedition. Matters went so far at Cahors, that two battalions which were there had great

difficulty in holding the town against the armed peasants; and troops intended for Spain were obliged to be sent there. It was found necessary to suspend the operation of the tax, but it was with great trouble that the movement of Quercy was put down, and the peasants, who had armed and collected together, induced to retire into their villages. In Perigord they rose, pillaged the bureaux, and rendered themselves masters of a little town and some castles, and forced some gentlemen to put themselves at their head. They declared publicly that they would pay the old taxes to King, curate, and lord, but that they would pay no more, or hear a word of any other taxes or vexation. In the end it was found necessary to drop this tax upon baptism and marriages, to the great regret of the tax-gatherers, who, by all manner of vexations and rogueries, had enriched themselves cruelly.

It was at this time, and in consequence, to some extent, of these events, that a man who had acquired the highest distinction in France was brought to the tomb in bitterness and grief, for that which in any other country would have covered him with honour. Vauban, for it is to him that I allude, patriot as he was, had all his life been touched with the misery of the people and the vexations they suffered. The knowledge that his offices gave him of the necessity for expense, the little hope he had that the King would retrench in matters of splendour and amusement, made him groan to see no remedy to an oppression which increased in weight from day to day. Feeling this, he made no journey that he did not collect information upon the

value and produce of the land, upon the trade and industry of the towns and provinces, on the nature of the imposts, and the manner of collecting them. Not content with this, he secretly sent to such places as he could not visit himself, or even to those he had visited, to instruct him in everything, and compare the reports he received with those he had himself made. The last twenty years of his life were spent in these researches, and at considerable cost to himself. In the end, he convinced himself that the land was the only real wealth, and he set himself to work to form a new system.

He had already made much progress, when several little books appeared by Boisguilbert, lieutenant-general at Rouen, who long since had had the same views as Vauban, and had wanted to make them known. From this labour had resulted a learned and profound book, in which a system was explained by which the people could be relieved of all the expenses they supported, and from every tax, and by which the revenue collected would go at once into the treasury of the King, instead of enriching, first the traitants, the intendants, and the finance ministers. These latter, therefore, were opposed to the system, and their opposition, as will be seen, was of no slight consequence.

Vauban read this book with much attention. He differed on some points with the author, but agreed with him in the main. Boisguilbert wished to preserve some imposts upon foreign commerce and upon provisions. Vauban wished to abolish all imposts, and to substitute for them two taxes, one upon the land, the

other upon trade and industry. His book, in which he put forth these ideas, was full of information and figures, all arranged with the utmost clearness, simplicity, and exactitude.

But it had a grand fault. It described a course which, if followed, would have ruined an army of financiers, of clerks, of functionaries of all kinds; it would have forced them to live at their own expense, instead of at the expense of the people; and it would have sapped the foundations of those immense fortunes that are seen to grow up in such a short time. This was enough to cause its failure.

All the people interested in opposing the work set up a cry. They saw place, power, everything, about to fly from their grasp, if the counsels of Vauban were acted upon. What wonder, then, that the King, who was surrounded by these people, listened to their reasons, and received with a very ill grace Maréchal Vauban when he presented his book to him. The ministers, it may well be believed, did not give him a better welcome. From that moment his services, his military capacity (unique of its kind), his virtues, the affection the King had had for him, all was forgotten. The King saw only in Maréchal Vauban a man led astray by love for the people, a criminal who attacked the authority of the ministers, and consequently that of the King. He explained himself to this effect without scruple.

The unhappy Maréchal could not survive the loss of his royal master's favour, or stand up against the enmity the King's explanations had created against

him; he died a few months after, consumed with grief, and with an affliction nothing could soften, and to which the King was insensible to such a point, that he made semblance of not perceiving that he had lost a servitor so useful and so illustrious. Vauban, justly celebrated over all Europe, was regretted in France by all who were not financiers or their supporters.

Boisguilbert, whom this event ought to have rendered wise, could not contain himself. One of the objections which had been urged against his theories, was the difficulty of carrying out changes in the midst of a great war. He now published a book refuting this point, and describing such a number of abuses then existing, to abolish which, he asked, was it necessary to wait for peace, that the ministers were outraged. Boisguilbert was exiled to Auvergne. I did all in my power to revoke this sentence, having known Boisguilbert at Rouen, but did not succeed until the end of two months. He was then allowed to return to Rouen, but was severely reprimanded, and stripped of his functions for some little time. He was amply indemnified, however, for this by the crowd of people, and the acclamations with which he was received.

It is due to Chamillart to say, that he was the only minister who had listened with any attention to these new systems of Vauban and Boisguilbert. He indeed made trial of the plans suggested by the former, but the circumstances were not favourable to his success, and they of course failed. Some time after, instead of following the system of Vauban, and reducing the imposts, fresh ones were added. Who would have said

to the Maréchal that all his labours for the relief of the people of France, would lead to new imposts, more harsh, more permanent, and more heavy than he protested against? It is a terrible lesson against all improvements in matters of taxation and finance.

But it is time, now, that I should retrace my steps to other matters, which, if related in due order of time, should have found a place ere this. And first, let me relate the particulars concerning a trial in which I was engaged, and which I have deferred allusion to until now, so as not to entangle the thread of my narrative.

My sister, as I have said in its proper place, had married the Duc de Brissac, and the marriage had not been a happy one. After a time, in fact, they separated. My sister at her death left me her universal legatee; and shortly after this, M. de Brissac brought an action against me on her account for five hundred thousand francs. After his death, his representatives continued the action, which I resisted, not only maintaining that I owed none of the five hundred thousand francs, but claiming to have two hundred thousand owing to me, out of six hundred thousand which had formed the dowry of my sister.

When M. de Brissac died, there seemed some probability that his peerage would become extinct; for the Comte de Cossé, who claimed to succeed him, was opposed by a number of peers, and but for me might have failed to establish his pretensions. I, however, as his claim was just, interested myself in him, supported him with all my influence, and gained for him the support of several influential peers: so that in

the end he was recognised as Duc de Brissac, and received as such at the parliament on the 6th of May, 1700.

Having succeeded thus to the titles and estates of his predecessor, he succeeded also to his liabilities, debts, and engagements. Among these was the trial against me for five hundred thousand francs. Cossé felt so thoroughly that he owed his rank to me that he offered to give me five hundred thousand francs, so as to indemnify me against an adverse decision in the cause. Now, as I have said, I not only resisted this demand made upon me for five hundred thousand francs, but I, in my turn, claimed two hundred thousand francs, and my claim, once admitted, all the personal creditors of the late Duc de Brissac (creditors, who of course, had to be paid by the new Duc), would have been forced to stand aside until my debt was settled.

I, therefore, refused this offer of Cossé, lest other creditors should hear of the arrangement, and force him to make a similar one with them. He was overwhelmed with a generosity so little expected, and we became more intimately connected from that day.

Cossé, once received as Duc de Brissac, I no longer feared to push forward the action I had commenced for the recovery of the two hundred thousand francs due to me, and which I had interrupted only on his account. I had gained it twice running against the late Duc de Brissac, at the parliament of Rouen; but the Duchesse d'Aumont, who in the last years of his

life had lent him money, and whose debt was in danger, succeeded in getting this cause sent up for appeal to the parliament at Paris, where she threw obstacle upon obstacle in its path, and caused judgment to be delayed month after month. When I came to take active steps in the matter, my surprise—to use no stronger word—was great, to find Cossé, after all I had done for him, favouring the pretensions of the Duchesse d'Aumont, and lending her his aid to establish them. However, he and the Duchesse d'Aumont lost their cause, for when it was submitted to the judges of the council at Paris, it was sent back to Rouen, and they had to pay damages and expenses.

For years the affair had been ready to be judged at Rouen, but M. d'Aumont every year, by means of his letters of state, obtained a postponement. At last, however, M. d'Aumont died, and I was assured that the letters of state should not be again produced, and that in consequence no further adjournment should take place. I and Madame de Saint Simon at once set out, therefore, for Rouen, where we were exceedingly well received, fêtes, and entertainments being continually given in our honour.

After we had been there but eight or ten days, I received a letter from Pontchartrain, who sent me word that the King had learnt with surprise I was at Rouen, and had charged him to ask me why I was there: so attentive was the King as to what became of the people of mark, he was accustomed to see around him! My reply was not difficult.

Meanwhile our cause proceeded. The parliament,

that is to say, the Grand Chamber, suspended all other business in order to finish ours. The affair was already far advanced, when it was interrupted by an obstacle, of all obstacles, the least possible to foresee. The letters of state had again been put in, for the purpose of obtaining another adjournment.

My design is not to weary by recitals, which interest only myself; but I must explain this matter fully. It was Monday evening. The parliament of Rouen ended on the following Saturday. If we waited until the opening of the next parliament, we should have to begin our cause from the beginning, and with new presidents and judges, who would know nothing of the facts. What was to be done? To appeal to the King seemed impossible, for he was at Marly, and, while there, never listened to such matters. By the time he left Marly, it would be too late to apply to him.

Madame de Saint Simon and others advised me, however, at all hazards, to go straight to the King, instead of sending a courier, as I thought of doing, and to keep my journey secret. I followed their advice, and setting out at once, arrived at Marly on Tuesday morning, the 8th of August, at eight of the clock. The Chancellor and Chamillart, to whom I told my errand, pitied me, but gave me no hope of success. Nevertheless, a council of state was to be held on the following morning, presided over by the King, and my petition was laid before it. The letters of state were thrown out by every voice. This information was brought to me at mid-day. I partook of a hasty dinner, and turned

back to Rouen, where I arrived on Thursday, at eight o'clock in the morning, three hours after a courier, by whom I had sent this unhoped-for news.

I brought with me, besides the order respecting the letters of state, an order to the parliament to proceed to judgment at once. It was laid before the judges very early on Saturday, the 11th of August, the last day of the parliament. From four o'clock in the morning we had an infinite number of visitors, wanting to accompany us to the palace. The parliament had been much irritated against these letters of state, after having suspended all other business for us. The withdrawal of these letters was now announced. We gained our cause, with penalties and expenses, amid acclamations which resounded through the court, and which followed us into the streets. We could scarcely enter our street, so full was it with the crowd, or our house, which was equally crowded. Our kitchen chimney soon after took fire, and it was only a marvel that it was extinguished without damage, after having strongly warned us, and turned our joy into bitterness. There was only the master of the house who was unmoved. We dined, however, with a grand company; and after stopping one or two days more to thank our friends, we went to see the sea at Dieppe, and then to Cani, to a beautiful house belonging to our host at Rouen.

As for Madame d'Aumont, she was furious at the ill-success of her affair. It was she who had obtained the letters of state from the steward of her son-in-law. Her son-in-law had promised me that they should not

be used, and wrote at once to say he had had no hand in their production. M. de Brissac, who had been afraid to look me in the face ever since he had taken part in this matter, and with whom I had openly broken, was now so much ashamed that he avoided me everywhere.

CHAPTER IX.

My appointment as ambassador to Rome—How it fell through—Anecdotes of the Bishop of Orleans—A droll song—A saint in spite of himself—Fashionable crimes—A forged genealogy—Abduction of Beringhen—The Parvulos of Meudon and Mademoiselle Choin.

It was just at the commencement of the year 1706, that I received a piece of news which almost took away my breath by its suddenness, and by the surprise it caused me. I was on very intimate terms with Gualterio, the nuncio of the Pope. Just about this time we were without an ambassador at Rome. The nuncio spoke to me about this post; but at my age—I was but thirty—and knowing the unwillingness of the King to employ young men in public affairs, I paid no attention to his words. Eight days afterwards he entered my chamber—one Tuesday, about an hour after mid-day—his arms open, joy painted upon his face, and embracing me, told me to shut my door, and even that of my antechamber, so that he should not be seen. I was to go to Rome as ambassador. I made him repeat this twice over: it seemed so impossible. If one of the portraits in my chamber had spoken to me, I could not have been more surprised. Gualterio begged me to keep the matter secret, saying, that

the appointment would be officially announced to me ere long.

I went immediately and sought out Chamillart, reproaching him for not having apprised me of this good news. He smiled at my anger, and said that the King had ordered the news to be kept secret. I admit that I was flattered at being chosen at my age for an embassy so important. I was advised on every side to accept it, and this I determined to do. I could not understand, however, how it was I had been selected. Torcy, years afterwards, when the King was dead, related to me how it came about. At this time I had no relations with Torcy; it was not until long afterwards that friendship grew up between us.

He said, then, that the embassy being vacant, the King wished to fill up that appointment, and wished also that a Duc should be ambassador. He took an almanack and began reading the names of the Ducs, commencing with M. de Uzés. He made no stop until he came to my name. Then he said (to Torcy) "What do you think of him? He is young, but he is good," &c. The King, after hearing a few opinions expressed by those around him, shut up the almanack, and said it was not worth while to go farther, determined that I should be ambassador, but ordered the appointment to be kept secret. I learnt this, more than ten years after its occurrence, from a true man, who had no longer any interest or reason to disguise anything from me.

Advised on all sides by my friends to accept the post offered to me, I did not long hesitate to do so. Madame de Saint Simon gave me the same advice,

although she herself was pained at the idea of quitting her family. I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of relating here what the three ministers each said of my wife, a woman then of only twenty-seven years of age. All three, unknown to each other, and without solicitation on my part, counselled me to keep none of the affairs of my embassy secret from her, but to give her a place at the end of the table when I read or wrote my despatches, and to consult her with deference upon everything. I have rarely so much relished advice as I did in this case. Although, as things fell out, I could not follow it at Rome, I had followed it long before, and continued to do so all my life. I kept nothing secret from her, and I had good reason to be pleased that I did not. Her counsel was always wise, judicious, and useful, and oftentimes she warded off from me many inconveniences.

But to continue the narrative of this embassy. It was soon so generally known that I was going to Rome, that as we danced at Marly, we heard people say, "Look! M. l'Ambassadeur or Madame l'Ambassadrice are dancing." After this I wished the announcement to be made public as soon as possible, but the King was not to be hurried. Day after day passed by, and still I was kept in suspense. At last, about the middle of April, I had an interview with Chamillart one day, just after he came out of the council at which I knew my fate had been decided. I learnt then that the King had determined to send no ambassador to Rome. The Abbé de La Tremoille was already there; he had been made Cardinal, and was to remain and attend to the

affairs of the embassy. I found out afterwards that I had reason to attribute to Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine the change in the King's intention towards me. Madame de Saint Simon was delighted. It seemed as though she foresaw the strange discredit in which the affairs of the King were going to fall in Italy, the embarrassment and the disorder that public misfortunes would cause the finances, and the cruel situation in which all things would have reduced us at Rome. As for me, I had had so much leisure to console myself beforehand, that I had need of no more. I felt, however, that I had now lost all favour with the King, and, indeed, he estranged himself from me more and more each day. By what means I recovered myself it is not yet time to tell.

On the night between the 3rd and 4th of February, Cardinal Coislin, Bishop of Orleans, died. He was a little man, very fat, who looked like a village curate. His purity of manners and his virtues caused him to be much loved. Two good actions of his life deserve to be remembered.

When, after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, the King determined to convert the Huguenots by means of dragoons and torture, a regiment was sent to Orleans, to be spread abroad in the diocese. As soon as it arrived, M. d'Orleans sent word to the officers that they might make his house their home; that their horses should be lodged in his stables. He begged them not to allow a single one of their men to leave the town, to make the slightest disorder; to say no word to the Huguenots, and not to lodge in

their houses. He resolved to be obeyed, and he was. The regiment stayed a month, and cost him a good deal. At the end of that time he so managed matters that the soldiers were sent away, and none came again. This conduct, so full of charity, so opposed to that of nearly all the other dioceses, gained as many Huguenots as were gained by the barbarities they suffered elsewhere. It needed some courage, to say nothing of generosity, to act thus, and to silently blame, as it were, the conduct of the King.

The other action of M. d'Orleans was less public and less dangerous, but was not less good. He secretly gave away many alms to the poor, in addition to those he gave publicly. Among those whom he succoured was a poor, broken-down gentleman, without wife or child, to whom he gave four hundred livres of pension, and a place at his table whenever he was at Orleans. One morning the servants of M. d'Orleans told their master that ten pieces of plate were missing, and that suspicion fell upon the gentleman. M. d'Orleans could not believe him guilty, but as he did not make his appearance at the house for several days, was forced at last to imagine he was so. Upon this he sent for the gentleman, who admitted himself to be the offender. M. d'Orleans said he must have been strangely pressed to commit an action of this nature, and reproached him for not having mentioned his wants. Then, drawing twenty louis from his pocket, he gave them to the gentleman, told him to forget what had occurred, and to use his table as before. M. d'Orleans prohibited his servants to mention their suspicions, and

this anecdote would never have been known, had it not been told by the gentleman himself, penetrated with confusion and gratitude.

M. d'Orleans, after he became cardinal, was often pressed by his friends to give up his bishopric. But this he would not listen to. The King had for him a respect that was almost devotion. When Madame de Bourgogne was about to be delivered of her first child, the King sent a courier to M. d'Orleans requesting him to come to Court immediately, and to remain there until after the delivery. When the child was born, the King would not allow it to be sprinkled by any other hand than that of M. d'Orleans. The poor man, very fat, as I have said, always sweated very much; on this occasion, wrapped up in his cloak and his lawn, his body ran with sweat in such abundance, that in the antechamber the floor was wet all round where he stood. All the Court was much afflicted at his death; the King more than anybody spoke his praises. It was known after his death, from his valet-de-chambre, that he mortified himself continually with instruments of penitence, and that he rose every night and passed an hour on his knees in prayer. He received the sacraments with great piety, and died the night following as he had lived.

Heudicourt the younger, a species of very mischievous satyr, and much mixed up in grand intrigues of gallantry, made, about this time, a song upon the grand *prévôt* and his family. It was so simple, so true to nature, withal so pleasant, that some one having whispered it in the ear of the Maréchal de Boufflers at

chapel, he could not refrain from bursting into laughter, although he was in attendance at the mass of the King. The Maréchal was the gravest and most serious man in all France; the greatest slave to decorum. The King turned round therefore in surprise, which augmented considerably when he saw the Maréchal de Boufflers nigh to bursting with laughter, and the tears running down his cheeks. On returning into his cabinet, he called the Maréchal, and asked what had put him in that state at the mass. The Maréchal repeated the song to him. Thereupon the King burst out louder than the Maréchal had, and for a whole fortnight afterwards could not help smiling whenever he saw the grand *prévôt* or any of his family. The song soon spread about, and much diverted the Court and the town.

I should particularly avoid soiling this page with an account of the operation for fistula which Courcillon, only son of Dangeau, had performed upon him, but for the extreme ridicule with which it was accompanied. Courcillon was a dashing young fellow, much given to witty sayings, to mischief, to impiety, and to the filthiest debauchery, of which latter, indeed, this operation passed publicly as the fruit. His mother, Madame Dangeau, was in the strictest intimacy with Madame de Maintenon. They two alone, of all the Court, were ignorant of the life Courcillon led. Madame was much afflicted; and quitted his bed-side, even for a moment, with pain. Madame de Maintenon entered into her sorrow, and went every day to bear her company at the pillow of Courcillon. Madame

d'Heudicourt, another intimate friend of Madame de Maintenon, was admitted there also, but scarcely anybody else. Courcillon listened to them, spoke devotionally to them, and uttered the reflections suggested by his state. They, all admiration, published everywhere that he was a saint. Madame d'Heudicourt and a few others who listened to these discourses, and who knew the pilgrim well, and saw him loll out his tongue at them on the sly, knew not what to do to prevent their laughter, and as soon as they could get away went and related all they had heard to their friends. Courcillon, who thought it a mighty honour to have Madame de Maintenon every day for nurse, but who, nevertheless, was dying of weariness, used to see his friends in the evening (when Madame de Maintenon and his mother were gone), and would relate to them, with burlesque exaggeration, all the miseries he had suffered during the day, and ridicule the devotional discourses he had listened to. All the time his illness lasted, Madame de Maintenon came every day to see him, so that her credulity, which no one dared to enlighten, was the laughing-stock of the Court. She conceived such a high opinion of the virtue of Courcillon, that she cited him always as an example, and the King also formed the same opinion. Courcillon took good care not to try and cultivate it when he became cured; yet neither the King nor Madame de Maintenon opened their eyes, or changed their conduct towards him. Madame de Maintenon, it must be said, except in the sublime intrigue of her government and with the King, was always the queen of dupes.

It would seem that there are, at certain times, fashions in crimes as in clothes. At the period of the Voysins and the Brinvilliers, there were nothing but poisoners abroad; and against these, a court was expressly instituted, called *ardente*, because it condemned them to the flames. At the time of which I am now speaking, 1703, for I forgot to relate what follows in its proper place, forgers of writings were in the ascendant, and became so common, that a chamber was established composed of councillors of state and others, solely to judge the accusations which this sort of criminals gave rise to.

The Bouillons wished to be recognised as descended, by male issue, of the Counts of Auvergne, and to claim all kinds of distinctions and honours in consequence. They had, however, no proofs of this, but, on the contrary, their genealogy proved it to be false. All on a sudden, an old document that had been interred in the obscurity of ages in the church of Brioude, was presented to Cardinal Bouillon. It had all the marks of antiquity, and contained a triumphant proof of the descent of the house of La Tour, to which the Bouillons belonged, from the ancient Counts of Auvergne. The Cardinal was delighted to have in his hands this precious document. But to avoid all suspicion, he affected modesty, and hesitated to give faith to evidence so decisive. He spoke in confidence to all the learned men he knew, and begged them to examine the document with care, so that he might not be the dupe of a too easy belief in it.

Whether the examiners were deceived by the docu-

ment, or whether they allowed themselves to be seduced into believing it, as is more than probable, from fear of giving offence to the Cardinal, need not be discussed. It is enough to say that they pronounced in favour of the deed, and that Father Mabillon, that Benedictine so well known throughout all Europe by his sense and his candour, was led by the others to share their opinion.

After this, Cardinal de Bouillon no longer affected any doubt about the authenticity of the discovery. All his friends complimented him upon it, the majority to see how he would receive their congratulations. It was a chaos rather than a mixture, of vanity the most outrageous, modesty the most affected, and joy the most immoderate which he could not restrain.

Unfortunately, De Bar, who had found the precious document, and who had presented it to Cardinal de Bouillon, was arrested and put in prison a short time after this, charged with many forgeries. This event made some stir, and caused suspicion to fall upon the document, which was now attentively examined through many new spectacles. Learned men unacquainted with the Bouillons contested it, and De Bar was so pushed upon this point, that he made many delicate admissions. Alarm at once spread among the Bouillons. They did all in their power to ward off the blow that was about to fall. Seeing the tribunal firm, and fully resolved to follow the affair to the end, they openly solicited for De Bar, and employed all their credit to gain his liberation. At last, finding the tribunal inflexible, they were reduced to take an

extreme resolution. M. de Bouillon admitted to the King, that his brother, Cardinal de Bouillon, might, unknown to all of them, have brought forward facts he could not prove. He added, that putting himself in the King's hands, he begged that the affair might be stopped at once, out of consideration for those whose only guilt was too great credulity, and too much confidence in a brother who had deceived them. The King, with more of friendship for M. de Bouillon, than of reflection as to what he owed by way of reparation for a public offence, agreed to this course.

De Bar, convicted of having fabricated this document, by his own admission before the public tribunal, was not condemned to death, but to perpetual imprisonment. As may be believed, this adventure made a great stir; but what cannot be believed so easily is, the conduct of the Messieurs Bouillon about fifteen months afterwards.

At the time when the false document above referred to was discovered, Cardinal de Bouillon had commissioned Baluze, a man much given to genealogical studies, to write the history of the house of Auvergne. In this history, the descent, by male issue, of the Bouillons from the Counts of Auvergne, was established upon the evidence supplied by this document. At least, nobody doubted that such was the case, and the world was strangely scandalised to see the work appear after that document had been pronounced to be a forgery. Many learned men and friends of Baluze considered him so dishonoured by it, that they broke off all

relations with him, and this put the finishing touch to the confusion of this affair.

On Thursday, the 7th of March, 1707, a strange event troubled the King, and filled the Court and the town with rumours. Beringhen, first master of the horse, left Versailles at seven o'clock in the evening of that day, to go to Paris, alone in one of the King's coaches, two of the royal footmen behind, and a groom carrying a torch before him on the seventh horse. The carriage had reached the plain of Bissancourt, and was passing between a farm on the road near Sevres bridge and a cabaret, called the "Dawn of Day," when it was stopped by fifteen or sixteen men on horseback, who seized on Beringhen, hurried him into a post-chaise in waiting, and drove off with him. The King's carriage, with the coachman, footmen, and groom, was allowed to go back to Versailles. As soon as it reached Versailles the King was informed of what had taken place. He sent immediately to his four Secretaries of State, ordering them to send couriers everywhere to the frontiers, with instructions to the governors to guard all the passages, so that if these horsemen were foreign enemies, as was suspected, they would be caught in attempting to pass out of the kingdom. It was known that a party of the enemy had entered Artois, that they had committed no disorders, but that they were there still. Although people found it difficult, at first, to believe that Beringhen had been carried off by a party such as this, yet as it was known that he had no enemies, that he was not reputed sufficiently rich to afford hope of a large ransom,

and that not one of our wealthiest financiers had been seized in this manner, this explanation was at last accepted as the right one.

So in fact it proved. A certain Guetem, a fiddler of the Elector of Bavaria, had entered the service of Holland, had taken part in the war against France, and had become a colonel. Chatting one evening with his comrades, he laid a wager that he would carry off some one of mark between Paris and Versailles. He obtained a passport, and thirty chosen men, nearly all of whom were officers. They passed the rivers disguised as traders, by which means they were enabled to post their relays [of horses]. Several of them had remained seven or eight days at Sevres, Saint Cloud, and Boulogne, from which they had the hardihood to go to Versailles and see the King sup. One of these was caught on the day after the disappearance of Beringhen, and when interrogated by Chamillart, replied with a tolerable amount of impudence. Another was caught in the forest of Chantilly by one of the servants of M. le Prince. From him it became known that relays of horses and a post-chaise had been provided at Morlière for the prisoner when he should arrive there, and that he had already passed the Oise.

As I have said, couriers were despatched to the governors of the frontiers; in addition to this, information of what had taken place was sent to all the intendants of the frontier, to all the troops in quarters there. Several of the King's guards, too, and the grooms of the stable, went in pursuit of the captors of Beringhen. Notwithstanding the diligence used, the

horsemen had traversed the Somme and had gone four leagues beyond Ham — Beringhen, guarded by the officers, and pledged to offer no resistance—when the party were stopped by a quartermaster and two detachments of the Livry regiment. Beringhen was at once set at liberty. Guetem and his companions were made prisoners.

The grand fault they had committed was to allow the King's carriage and the footmen to go back to Versailles so soon after the abduction. Had they led away the coach under cover of the night, and so kept the King in ignorance of their doings until the next day, they would have had more time for their retreat. Instead of doing this they fatigued themselves by too much haste. They had grown tired of waiting for a carriage that seemed likely to contain somebody of mark. The Chancellor had passed, but in broad daylight, and they were afraid in consequence to stop him. M. le Duc d'Orleans had passed, but in a post-chaise, which they mistrusted. At last Beringhen appeared in one of the King's coaches, attended by servants in the King's livery, and wearing his *cordon bleu*, as was his custom. They thought they had found a prize indeed. They soon learnt with whom they had to deal, and told him also who they were. Guetem bestowed upon Beringhen all kinds of attention, and testified a great desire to spare him as much as possible all fatigue. He pushed his attentions so far that they caused his failure. He allowed Beringhen to stop and rest on two occasions. The party missed one of their relays, and that delayed them very much.

Beringhen, delighted with his rescue, and very grateful for the good treatment he had received, changed places with Guetem and his companions, led them to Ham, and in his turn treated them well. He wrote to his wife and to Chamillart announcing his release, and these letters were read with much satisfaction by the King.

On Tuesday, the 29th of March, Beringhen arrived at Versailles, about eight o'clock in the evening, and went at once to the King, who was in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, and who received him well, and made him relate all his adventures. But the King was not pleased when he found the officers of the stable in a state of great delight, and preparing fireworks to welcome Beringhen back. He prohibited all these marks of rejoicing, and would not allow the fireworks to be let off. He had these little jealousies. He wished that all should be devoted to him alone without reserve and without division. All the Court, however, showed interest in this return, and Beringhen was consoled by the public welcome he received for his fatigue.

Guetem and his officers, while waiting the pleasure of the King, were lodged in Beringhen's house in Paris, where they were treated above their deserts. Beringhen obtained permission for Guetem to see the King. He did more; he presented Guetem to the King, who praised him for having so well treated his prisoner, and said that war always ought to be conducted properly. Guetem, who was not without wit, replied, that he was so astonished to find himself before the greatest King in the world, and to find that King doing him the honour of speaking to him, that

he had not power enough to answer. He remained ten or twelve days in Beringhen's house to see Paris, the Opera and the Comedy, and became the talk of the town. People ran after him everywhere, and the most distinguished were not ashamed to do likewise. On all sides he was applauded for an act of temerity, which might have passed for insolence. Beringhen regaled him, furnished him with carriages and servants to accompany him, and, at parting, with money and considerable presents. Guetem went on his parole to Rheims to rejoin his comrades until exchanged, and had the town for prison. Nearly all the others had escaped. The project was nothing less than to carry off Monseigneur, or one of the princes, his sons.

This ridiculous adventure gave rise to precautions, excessive in the first place, and which caused sad obstructions of bridges and gates. It caused, too, a number of people to be arrested. The hunting parties of the princes were for some time interfered with, until matters resumed their usual course. But it was not bad fun to see, during some time, the terror of ladies, and even of men, of the Court, who no longer dared go abroad except in broad daylight, even then with little assurance, and imagining themselves everywhere in marvellous danger of capture.

I have related in its proper place, the adventure of Madame la Princesse de Conti with Mademoiselle Choin and the attachment of Monseigneur for the latter. This attachment was only augmented by the difficulty of seeing each other.

Mademoiselle Choin retired to the house of Lacroix,

one of her relatives at Paris, where she lived quite hidden. She was informed of the rare days when Monseigneur dined alone at Meudon, without sleeping there. She went there the day before in a *fiacre*, passed through the courts on foot, ill clad, like a common sort of woman going to see some officer at Meudon, and, by a back staircase, was admitted to Monseigneur, who passed some hours with her in a little apartment on the first floor. In time she came there with a lady's-maid, her parcel in her pocket, on the evenings of the days that Monseigneur slept there. She remained in this apartment without seeing anybody, attended by her lady's-maid, and waited upon by a servant who alone was in the secret.

Little by little the friends of Monseigneur were allowed to see her; and amongst these were M. le Prince de Conti, Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne, Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne, and M. le Duc de Berry. There was always, however, an air of mystery about the matter. The parties that took place were kept secret, although frequent, and were called *parvulos*.

Mademoiselle Choin remained in her little apartment only for the convenience of Monseigneur. She slept in the bed and in the grand apartment where Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne lodged when the King was at Meudon. She always sat in an arm-chair before Monseigneur; Madame de Bourgogne sat on a stool. Mademoiselle Choin never rose for her; in speaking of her, even before Monseigneur and the company, she used to say "the Duchesse de Bour-

gogne," and lived with her as Madame de Maintenon did, excepting that "darling" and "my aunt" were terms not exchanged between them, and that Madame de Bourgogne was not nearly so free, or so much at her ease, as with the King and Madame de Maintenon. Monsieur de Bourgogne was much in restraint. His manners did not agree with those of that world. Monseigneur le Duc de Berry, who was more free, was quite at home.

Mademoiselle Choin went on fête-days to hear mass in the chapel at six o'clock in the morning, well wrapped up, and took her meals alone, when Monseigneur did not eat with her. When he was alone with her, the doors were all guarded and barricaded to keep out intruders. People regarded her as being to Monseigneur, what Madame de Maintenon was to the King. All the batteries for the future were directed and pointed towards her. People schemed to gain permission to visit her at Paris; people paid court to her friends and acquaintances. Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne sought to please her, was respectful to her, attentive to her friends, not always with success. She acted towards Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne like a mother-in-law, and sometimes spoke with such authority and bluntness to Madame de Bourgogne as to make her cry.

The King and Madame de Maintenon were in no way ignorant of all this, but they held their tongues, and all the Court who knew it, spoke only in whispers of it. This is enough for the present; it will serve to explain many things, of which I shall speak anon.

CHAPTER X.

Death and Last Days of Madame de Montespan—Selfishness of the King—Death and Character of Madame de Nemours — Neufchatel and Prussia—Campaign of Villars—Naval Successes—Inundations of the Loire—Siege of Toulon—A Quarrel about News—Quixotic Despatches of Tessé.

On Wednesday, the 27th of May, 1707, at three o'clock in the morning, Madame de Montespan, aged sixty, died very suddenly at the waters of Bourbon. Her death made much stir, although she had long retired from the Court and from the world, and preserved no trace of the commanding influence she had so long possessed. I need not go back beyond my own experience, and to the time of her reign as mistress of the King. I will simply say, because the anecdote is little known, that her conduct was more the fault of her husband than her own. She warned him as soon as she suspected the King to be in love with her; and told him when there was no longer any doubt upon her mind. She assured him that a great entertainment that the King gave was in her honour. She pressed him, she entreated him in the most eloquent manner, to take her away to his estates of Guyenne, and leave her there until the King had forgotten her or chosen another mistress. It was all to no purpose;

and Montespan was not long before repentance seized him; for his torment was that he loved her all his life and died still in love with her—although he would never consent to see her again after the first scandal.

Nor will I speak of the divers degrees which the fear of the devil at various times put to her separation from the Court; and I will elsewhere speak of Madame de Maintenon, who owed her everything, who fed her on serpents, and who at last ousted her from the Court. What no one dared to say, what the King himself dared not, M. du Maine, her son, dared. M. de Meaux (Bossuet) did the rest. She went in tears and fury, and never forgave M. du Maine, who by his strange service gained over for ever to his interests the heart and the mighty influence of Madame de Maintenon.

The mistress, retired amongst the Community of St. Joseph, which she had built, was long in accustoming herself to it. She carried about her idleness and unhappiness to Bourbon, to Fontevrault, to d'Antin; she was many years without succeeding in obtaining mastery over herself. At last God touched her. Her sin had never been accompanied by forgetfulness; she used often to leave the King to go and pray in her cabinet; nothing could ever make her evade any fast-day or meagre day; her austerity in fasting continued amidst all her dissipation. She gave alms, was esteemed by good people, never gave way to doubt or impiety; but she was imperious, haughty, and overbearing, full of mockery, and of all the qualities by which beauty with the power it bestows is naturally accompanied. Being resolved at last to take advantage

of an opportunity which had been given her against her will, she put herself in the hands of P. de la Tour, that famous General of the Oratory. From that moment to the time of her death her conversion continued steadily, and her penitence augmented. She had first to get rid of the secret fondness she still entertained for the Court, even of the hopes which, however chimerical, had always flattered her. She was persuaded that nothing but the fear of the devil had forced the King to separate himself from her, that it was nothing but this fear that had raised Madame de Maintenon to the height she had attained; that age and ill-health, which she was pleased to imagine, would soon clear the way; that when the King was a widower, she being a widow, nothing would oppose their reunion, which might easily be brought about by their affection for their children. These children entertained similar hopes, and were therefore assiduous in their attention to her for some time.

Père de la Tour made her perform a terrible act of penitence. It was to ask pardon of her husband, and to submit herself to his commands. To all who knew Madame de Montespan this will seem the most heroic sacrifice. M. de Montespan, however, imposed no restraint upon his wife. He sent word that he wished in no way to interfere with her, or even to see her. She experienced no further trouble, therefore, on this score.

Little by little she gave almost all she had to the poor. She worked for them several hours a day, making stout shirts and such things for them. Her

table that she had loved to excess became the most frugal; her fasts multiplied; she would interrupt her meals in order to go and pray. Her mortifications were continued; her chemises and her sheets were of rough linen, of the hardest and thickest kind, but hidden under others of ordinary kind. She unceasingly wore bracelets, garters, and a girdle, all armed with iron points, which oftentimes inflicted wounds upon her; and her tongue, formerly so dangerous, had also its peculiar penance imposed on it. She was moreover so tormented with the fear of death, that she employed several women, whose sole occupation was to watch her. She went to sleep with all the curtains of her bed open, many lights in her chamber, and her women around her. Whenever she awoke she wished to find them chatting, playing, or enjoying themselves, so as to re-assure herself against their drowsiness.

With all this she could never throw off the manners of a queen. She had an arm-chair in her chamber with its back turned to the foot of the bed. There was no other in the chamber, not even when her natural children came to see her, not even for Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans. She was oftentimes visited by the most distinguished people of the Court, and she spoke like a queen to all. She treated everybody with much respect, and was treated so in turn. I have mentioned in its proper place, that a short time before her death, the King gave her a hundred thousand francs to buy an estate; but this present was not gratis, for she had to send back a necklace worth

a hundred and fifty thousand, to which the King made additions, and bestowed it on the Duchesse de Bourgogne.

The last time Madame de Montespan went to Bourbon she paid all her charitable pensions and gratuities two years in advance, and doubled her alms. Although in good health she had a presentiment that she should return no more. This presentiment, in effect, proved correct. She felt herself so ill one night, although she had been very well just before, that she confessed herself, and received the Sacrament. Previous to this she called all her servants into her room and made a public confession of her public sins, asking pardon for the scandal she had caused with a humility so decent, so profound, so penitent, that nothing could be more edifying. She received the last sacrament with an ardent piety. The fear of death which all her life had so continually troubled her, disappeared suddenly, and disturbed her no more. She died, without regret, occupied only with thoughts of eternity, and with a sweetness and tranquillity that accompanied all her actions.

Her only son by Monsieur de Montespan, whom she had treated like a mother-in-law, until her separation from the King, but who had since returned to her affection, D'Antin, arrived just before her death. She looked at him, and only said that he saw her in a very different state to what he had seen her at Bellegarde. As soon as she was dead he set out for Paris, leaving orders for her obsequies, which were strange, or were strangely executed. Her body, formerly so perfect,

became the prey of the unskilfulness and the ignorance of a surgeon. The obsequies were at the discretion of the commonest valets, all the rest of the house having suddenly deserted. The body remained a long time at the door of the house, whilst the canons of the Sainte Chapelle and the priests of the parish disputed about the order of precedence with more than indecency. It was put in keeping under care of the parish, like the corpse of the meanest citizen of the place, and not until a long time afterwards was it sent to Poitiers to be placed in the family tomb, and then with an unworthy parsimony. Madame de Montespan was bitterly regretted by all the poor of the province, amongst whom she spread an infinity of alms, as well as amongst others of different degree.

As for the King, his perfect insensibility at the death of a mistress he had so passionately loved, and for so many years, was so extreme, that Madame de Bourgogne could not keep her surprise from him. He replied, tranquilly, that since he had dismissed her he had reckoned upon never seeing her again, and that thus she was from that time dead to him. It is easy to believe that the grief of the children he had had by her did not please him. Those children did not dare to wear mourning for a mother not recognised. Their appearance, therefore, contrasted with that of the children of Madame de la Vallière, who had just died, and for whom they were wearing mourning. Nothing could equal the grief which Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, Madame la Duchesse, and the Comte de Toulouse exhibited. The grief of Madame la Duchesse especially

was astonishing, for she always prided herself on loving nobody: still more astonishing was the grief of M. le Duc, so inaccessible to friendship. We must remember, however, that this death put an end to many hopes. M. du Maine, for his part, could scarcely repress his joy at the death of his mother, and after having stopped away from Marly two days, returned and caused the Comte of Toulouse to be recalled likewise. Madame de Maintenon, delivered of a former rival, whose place she had taken, ought, it might have been thought, to have felt relieved. It was otherwise; remorse for the benefits she had received from Madame de Montespan, and for the manner in which those benefits had been repaid, overwhelmed her. Tears stole down her cheeks, and she went into a strange privacy to hide them. Madame de Bourgogne, who followed, was speechless with astonishment.

The life and conduct of so famous a mistress, subsequent to her forced retirement, have appeared to me sufficiently curious to describe at length; and what happened at her death was equally characteristic of the Court.

The death of the Duchesse de Nemours, which followed quickly upon that of Madame de Montespan, made still more stir in the world, but of another kind. Madame de Nemours was daughter, by a first marriage, of the last Duc de Longueville. She was extremely rich, and lived in great splendour. She had a strange look, and a droll way of dressing,—big eyes with which she could scarcely see, a shoulder that constantly twitched, grey hairs that she wore flowing, and a very

imposing air. She was a very bad temper, and could not forgive. When somebody asked her if she said the *Pater*, she replied, yes, but that she passed by without saying it the clause respecting pardon for our enemies. She did not like her kinsfolk, the Matignons, and would never see nor speak to any of them. One day, talking to the King at a window of his cabinet, she saw Matignon passing in the court below. Whereupon she set to spitting five or six times running, and then turned to the King and begged his pardon, saying, that she could never see a Matignon without spitting in that manner. It may be imagined that devotion did not incommode her. She herself used to tell a story, that having entered one day a confessional, without being followed into the church, neither her appearance nor her dress gave her confessor an idea of her rank. She spoke of her great wealth, and said much about the Princes de Condé and de Conti. The confessor told her to pass by all that. She, feeling that the case was a serious one, insisted upon explaining, and made allusion to her large estates and her millions. The good priest believed her mad, and told her to calm herself, to get rid of such ideas; to think no more of them; and, above all, to eat good soups if she had the means to procure them. Seized with anger she rose and left the place. The confessor out of curiosity followed her to the door. When he saw the good lady, whom he thought mad, received by grooms, waiting women, and so on, he had like to have fallen backwards; but he ran to the coach door and asked her pardon. It was now her turn to laugh at

him, and she got off scot free that day from the confessional.

Madame de Nemours had amongst other possessions the sovereignty of Neufchâtel. As soon as she was dead, various claimants arose to dispute the succession. Madame de Mailly laid claim to it, as to the succession to the principality of Orange, upon the strength of a very doubtful alliance with the house of Châlons, and hoped to be supported by Madame de Maintenon. But Madame de Maintenon laughed at her chimeras, as they were laughed at in Switzerland. M. le Prince de Conti was another claimant. He based his right upon the will of the last Duc de Longueville, by which he had been called to all the Duc's wealth, after the Count de Saint Paul, his brother, and his posterity. In addition to these, there were Matignon and the dowager Duchesse de Lesdiguières, who claimed Neufchâtel by right of their relationship to Madame de Nemours.

Matignon was an intimate friend of Chamillart, who did not like the Prince de Conti, and was the declared enemy of the Maréchal de Villeroy, the representative of Madame de Lesdiguières in this affair. Chamillart, therefore, persuaded the King to remain neutral, and aided Matignon by money and influence to get the start of the other claimants.

The haughty citizens of Neufchâtel saw then all these suitors begging for their suffrages, when a minister of the Elector of Brandebourg appeared amongst them, and disputed the pretensions of the Prince de Conti, in favour of his master, the Elector of Brandebourg (King of Prussia), who drew his claim

from the family of Châlons. It was more distant, more entangled, if possible, than that of Madame de Mailly. He only made use of it, therefore, as a pretext. His reasons were his religion, in conformity with that of the country; the support of the neighbouring protestant cantons, allies, and protectors of Neufchâtel; the pressing reflection that the principality of Orange having fallen by the death of William III., to M. le Prince de Conti, the King (Louis XIV.) had appropriated it, and recompensed him for it: and that he might act similarly if Neufchâtel fell to one of his subjects; lastly, a treaty produced in good form, by which, in the event of the death of Madame des Nemours, England and Holland agreed to declare for the Elector of Brandebourg, and to assist him by force in procuring this little state. This minister of the Elector was in concert with the protestant cantons, who, upon his declaration, at once sided with him; and who, by the money spent, the conformity of religion, the power of the Elector, the reflection of what had happened at Orange, found nearly all the suffrages favourable. So, striking while the iron was hot, they obtained a provisional judgment from Neufchâtel, which adjudged their state to the Elector until the peace; and in consequence of this, his minister was put into actual possession, and M. le Prince de Conti saw himself constrained to return more shamefully than he had returned once before, and was followed by the other claimants.

Madame de Mailly made such an uproar at the news of this intrusion of the Elector, that at last the

attention of our ministers was awakened. They found, with her, that it was the duty of the King not to allow this morsel to be carried off from his subjects; and that there was danger in leaving it in the hands of such a powerful protestant prince, capable of making a fortified place of it so close to the county of Burgundy, and on a frontier so little protected. Thereupon, the King despatched a courier to our minister in Switzerland, with orders to go to Neufchâtel, and employ every means, even menaces, to exclude the Elector, and to promise that the neutrality of France should be maintained, if one of her subjects was selected, no matter which one. It was too late. The affair was finished; the cantons were engaged, without means of withdrawing. They, moreover, were piqued into resistance, by an appeal to their honour by the electoral minister, who insisted on the menaces of Puysieux, our representative, to whose memoir the ministers of England and Holland printed a violent reply. The provisional judgment received no alteration. Shame was felt; and resentment was testified during six weeks; after which, for lack of being able to do better, this resentment was appeased of itself. It may be imagined what hope remained to the claimants of reversing at the peace this provisional judgment, and of struggling against a prince so powerful and so solidly supported. No mention of it was afterwards made, and Neufchâtel has remained ever since fully and peaceably to this prince, who was even expressly confirmed in his possession, at the peace, by France.

The armies assembled this year towards the end of

May, and the campaign commenced. The Duc de Vendôme was in command in Flanders, under the Elector of Bavaria, and by his slothfulness and inattention, allowed Marlborough to steal a march upon him, which, but for the failure of some of the arrangements, might have caused serious loss to our troops. The enemy was content to keep simply on the defensive after this, having projects of attack in hand elsewhere, to which I shall soon allude.

On the Rhine, the Maréchal de Villars was in command, and was opposed by the Marquis of Bayreuth, and afterwards by the Duke of Hanover, since King of England. Villars was so far successful, that finding himself feebly opposed by the Imperials, he penetrated into Germany, after having made himself master of Heidelberg, Mannheim, and all the Palatinate, and seized upon a number of cannons, provisions, and munitions of war. He did not forget to tax the enemy wherever he went. He gathered immense sums—treasures beyond all his hopes. Thus gorged, he could not hope that his brigandage would remain unknown. He put on a bold face, and wrote to the King, that the army would cost him nothing this year. Villars begged at the same time to be allowed to appropriate some of the money he had acquired to the levelling of a hill on his estate which displeased him. Another than he would have been dishonoured by such a request. But it made no difference in his respect, except with the public, with whom, however, he occupied himself but little. His booty clutched, he thought of withdrawing from the enemy's country,

and passing the Rhine. He crossed it tranquilly, with his army and his immense booty, despite the attempts of the Duke of Hanover to prevent him, and as soon as he was on this side, had no care but how to terminate the campaign in repose. Thus finished a campaign, tolerably brilliant, if the sordid and prodigious gain of the general had not soiled it. Yet that general on his return, was not less well received by the King.

At sea we had successes. Forbin, with vessels more feeble than the four English ones of seventy guns, which convoyed a fleet of eighteen ships loaded with provisions and articles of war, took two of those vessels of war and the eighteen merchantmen, after four hours' fighting, and set fire to one of the two others. Three months after he took at the mouth of the Dwina seven richly-loaded Dutch merchant-ships, bound for Muscovy. He took or sunk more than fifty during this campaign. Afterwards he took three large English ships of war that he led to Brest, and sank another of a hundred guns. The English of New England, and of New York were not more successful in Acadia; they attacked our colony twelve days running, without success, and were obliged to retire with much loss.

The maritime year finished by a terrible tempest upon the coast of Holland, which caused many vessels to perish in the Texel, and submerged a large number of districts and villages. France had also its share of these catastrophes. The Loire overflowed in a manner hitherto unheard of, broke down the embank-

ments, inundated and covered with sand many parts of the country, carried away villages, drowned numbers of people and a quantity of cattle, and caused damage to the amount of above eight millions. This was another of our obligations to M. de la Feuillade—an obligation which we have not yet escaped from. Nature, wiser than man, had placed rocks in the Loire above Roanne, which prevented navigation to that place, the principal in the duchy of M. de la Feuillade. His father, tempted by the profit of this navigation, wished to get rid of the rocks. Orleans, Blois, Tours, in one word, all the places on the Loire opposed this. They represented the danger of inundations; they were listened to, and although the M. de la Feuillade of that day was a favourite, and on good terms with M. Colbert, he was not allowed to carry out his wishes with respect to these rocks. His son, the M. de la Feuillade, whom we have seen figuring with so little distinction at the siege of Turin, had more credit. Without listening to anybody, he blew up the rocks, and the navigation was rendered free in his favour; the inundations that they used to prevent have overflown since at immense loss to the King and private individuals. The cause was clearly seen afterwards, but then it was too late.

The little effort made by the enemy in Flanders and Germany, had a cause, which began to be perceived towards the middle of July. We had been forced to abandon Italy. By a shameful treaty that was made, all our troops had retired from that country into Savoy. We had given up everything. Prince Eugène, who

had had the glory of driving us out of Italy, remained there some time, and then entered the county of Nice. Forty of the enemy's vessels arrived at Nice shortly afterwards, and landed artillery. M. de Savoie arrived there also, with six or seven thousand men. It was now no longer hidden that the siege of Toulon was determined on. Every preparation was at once made to defend the place. Tessé was in command. The delay of a day on the part of the enemy saved Toulon, and it may be said, France. M. de Savoie had been promised money by the English. They disputed a whole day about the payment, and so retarded the departure of the fleet from Nice. In the end, seeing M. de Savoie firm, they paid him a million, which he received himself. But in the meantime twenty-one of our battalions had had time to arrive at Toulon. They decided the fortune of the siege. After several unsuccessful attempts to take the place, the enemy gave up the siege and retired in the night, between the 22nd and 23rd of August, in good order, and without being disturbed. Our troops could obtain no sort of assistance from the people of Provence, so as to harass M. de Savoie in his passage of the Var. They refused money, militia, and provisions bluntly, saying that it was no matter to them who came, and that M. de Savoie could not torment them more than they were tormented already.

The important news of a deliverance so desired arrived at Marly on Friday, the 26th of August, and overwhelmed all the Court with joy. A scandalous fuss arose however out of this event. The first

courier who brought the intelligence of it, had been despatched by the commander of the fleet, and had been conducted to the King by Pontchartrain, who had the affairs of the navy under his control. The courier sent by Tessé, who commanded the land forces, did not arrive until some hours after the other. Chamillart, who received this second courier, was piqued to excess that Pontchartrain had outstripped him with the news. He declared that the news did not belong to the navy, and consequently Pontchartrain had no right to carry it to the King. The public, strangely enough sided with Chamillart, and on every side Pontchartrain was treated as a greedy usurper. Nobody had sufficient sense to reflect upon the anger which a master would feel against a servant, who, having the information by which that master could be relieved from extreme anxiety, should yet withhold the information for six or eight hours, on the ground that to tell it was the duty of another servant!

The strangest thing is, that the King, who was the most interested, had not the force to declare himself on either side, but kept silent. The torrent was so impetuous that Pontchartrain had only to lower his head, keep silent, and let the waters pass. Such was the weakness of the King for his ministers. I recollect that, in 1702, the Duc de Villeroy brought to Marly the important news of the battle of Luzzara. But, because Chamillart was not there, he hid himself, left the King and the Court in the utmost anxiety, and did not announce his news until long after, when Chamillart, hearing of his arrival, hastened to join him

and present him to the King. The King was so far from being displeased, that he made the Duc de Villeroy Lieutenant-General before dismissing him.

There is another odd thing that I must relate before quitting this affair. Tessé, as I have said, was charged with the defence of Toulon by land. It was a charge of no slight importance. He was in a country where nothing was prepared, and where everything was wanting; the fleet of the enemy and their army were near at hand, commanded by two of the most skilful captains of the day: if they succeeded, the kingdom itself was in danger, and the road open to the enemy even to Paris. A general thus situated would have been in no humour for jesting, it might have been thought. But this was not the case with Tessé. He found time to write to Pontchartrain all the details of the war and all that passed amongst our troops, in the style of Don Quixotte, of whom he called himself the wretched squire and the Sancho; and everything he wrote he adapted to the adventures of that romance. Pontchartrain showed me these letters; they made him die with laughing, he admired them so; and in truth they were very comical, and he imitated that romance with more wit than I believed him to possess. It appeared to me incredible, however, that a man should write thus, at such a critical time, to curry favour with a secretary of state. I could not have believed it had I not seen it.

CHAPTER XI.

Precedence at the Communion Table—The King offended with Madame de Torcy—The King's Religion—Atheists and Jansenists—Project against Scotland — Preparations — Failure — The Chevalier de St. George—His return to Court.

I WENT this summer to Forges, to try, by means of the waters there, to get rid of a tertian fever that quinquina only suspended. While there I heard of a new enterprise on the part of the princes of the blood, who, in the discredit in which the King held them, profited without measure by his desire for the grandeur of the illegitimate children, to acquire new advantages which were suffered because the others shared them. This was the case in question.

After the elevation of the Mass—at the King's communion—a folding chair was pushed to the foot of the altar, was covered with a piece of stuff, and then with a large cloth, which hung down before and behind. At the *Pater* the chaplain rose and whispered in the King's ear the names of all the Ducs who were in the chapel. The King named two, always the oldest, to each of whom the chaplain advanced and made a reverence. During the communion of the priest the King rose, and went and knelt down on the bare floor behind this

folding seat, and took hold of the cloth; at the same time the two Ducs, the elder on the right, the other on the left, each took hold of a corner of the cloth; the two chaplains took hold of the other two corners of the same cloth, on the side of the altar, all four kneeling, and the captain of the guards also kneeling and behind the King. The communion received and the oblation taken some moments afterwards, the King remained a little while in the same place, then returned to his own, followed by the two Ducs and the captain of the guards, who took theirs. If a son of France happened to be there alone, he alone held the right corner of the cloth, and nobody the other; and when M. le Duc d'Orleans was there, and no son of France was present, M. le Duc d'Orleans held the cloth in like manner. If a prince of the blood were alone present, however, he held the cloth, but a Duc was called forward to assist him. He was not privileged to act without the Duc.

The princes of the blood wanted to change this; they were envious of the distinction accorded to M. d'Orleans, and wished to put themselves on the same footing. Accordingly, at the Assumption of this year, they managed so well that M. le Duc served alone at the altar at the King's communion, no Duc being called upon to come and join him. The surprise at this was very great. The Duc de la Force and the Maréchal de Boufflers, who ought to have served, were both present. I wrote to this last to say that such a thing had never happened before, and that it was contrary to all precedent. I wrote, too, to M. d'Orleans,

who was then in Spain, informing him of the circumstance. When he returned he complained to the King. But the King merely said that the Ducs ought to have presented themselves and taken hold of the cloth. But how could they have done so, without being requested, as was customary, to come forward? What would the King have thought of them if they had? To conclude, nothing could be made of the matter, and it remained thus. Never then, since that time, did I go to the communions of the King.*

An incident occurred at Marly about the same time, which made much stir. The ladies who were invited to Marly, had the privilege of dining with the King. Tables were placed for them, and they took up positions according to their rank. The non-titled ladies had also their special place. It so happened one day, that Madame de Torcy (an untitled lady) placed herself above the Duchesse de Duras, who arrived at table a moment after her. Madame de Torcy offered to give up her place, but it was a little late, and the offer passed away in compliments. The King entered, and put himself at table. As soon as he sat down, he saw the place Madame de Torcy had taken, and fixed such a serious and surprised look upon her, that she again offered to give up her place to the Duchesse de Duras; but the offer was again declined. All through the dinner the King scarcely

* How characteristic is this solemn narrative of etiquette round the communion table, not only of the King and the Court, but of St. Simon himself! If it were my business to comment on such passages, what language could I employ that would not seem to refer to the conduct of monkeys or penguins rather than that of men?

ever took his eyes off Madame de Torcy, said hardly a word, and bore a look of anger that rendered everybody very attentive, and even troubled the Duchesse de Duras.

Upon rising from the table, the King passed, according to custom, into the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, followed by the princesses of the blood, who grouped themselves around him upon stools; the others who entered, kept at a distance. Almost before he had seated himself in his chair, he said to Madame de Maintenon, that he had just been witness of an act of "incredible insolence" (that was the term he used) which had thrown him into such a rage that he had been unable to eat: that such an enterprise would have been insupportable in a woman of the highest quality; but coming, as it did, from a mere Bourgeoise, it had so affected him, that ten times he had been upon the point of making her leave the table, and that he was only restrained by consideration for her husband. After this outbreak he made a long discourse upon the genealogy of Madame de Torcy's family, and other matters; and then, to the astonishment of all present, grew as angry as ever against Madame de Torcy. He went off then into a discourse upon the dignity of the Ducs, and in conclusion, he charged the princesses to tell Madame de Torcy to what extent he had found her conduct impertinent. The princesses looked at each other, and not one seemed to like this commission; whereupon, the King, growing more angry, said, that it must be undertaken however, and left the room.

The news of what had taken place, and of the King's choler, soon spread all over the Court. It was believed, however, that all was over, and that nothing more would be heard of the matter. Yet the very same evening the King broke out again with even more bitterness than before. On the morrow, too, surprise was great indeed, when it was found that the King, immediately after dinner, could talk of nothing but this subject, and that, too, without any softening of tone. At last he was assured that Madame de Torcy had been spoken to, and this appeased him a little. Torcy was obliged to write him a letter, apologising for the fault of Madame de Torcy, and the King at this grew content. It may be imagined what a sensation this adventure produced all through the Court.

While upon the subject of the King, let me relate an anecdote of him, which should have found a place ere this. When M. d'Orléans was about to start for Spain, he named the officers who were to be of his suite. Amongst others was Fontpertius. At that name the King put on a serious look.

"What! my nephew," he said. "Fontpertius! the son of a Jansenist—of that silly woman who ran everywhere after M. Arnould! I do not wish that man to go with you."

"By my faith, Sire," replied the Duc d'Orléans, "I know not what the mother has done; but as for the son, he is far enough from being a Jansenist, I'll answer for it; for he does not believe in God."

"Is it possible, my nephew?" said the King, softening.

"Nothing more certain, Sire, I assure you."

"Well, since it is so," said the King, "there is no harm: you can take him with you."

This scene—for it can be called by no other name—took place in the morning. After dinner M. d'Orléans repeated it to me, bursting with laughter, word for word, just as I have written it. When we had both well laughed at this, we admired the profound instruction of a discreet and religious King, who considered it better not to believe in God than to be a Jansenist, and who thought there was less danger to his nephew from the impiety of an unbeliever, than from the doctrines of a sectarian. M. d'Orléans could not contain himself while he told the story, and never spoke of it without laughing until the tears came into his eyes. It ran all through the Court and all over the town, and the marvellous thing was, that the King was not angry at this. It was a testimony of his attachment to the good doctrine which withdrew him further and further from Jansenism. The majority of people laughed with all their heart. Others, more wise, felt rather disposed to weep than to laugh, in considering to what excess of blindness the King had reached.

For a long time a most important project had knocked at every door, without being able to obtain a hearing anywhere. The project was this:—Hough, an English gentleman full of talent and knowledge, and who, above all, knew profoundly the laws of his country, had

filled various posts in England. At first a minister by profession, and furious against King James; afterwards a Catholic and King James's spy, he had been delivered up to King William who pardoned him. He profited by this only to continue his services to James. He was taken several times, and always escaped from the Tower of London and other prisons. Being no longer able to dwell in England he came to France, where he occupied himself always with the same line of business, and was payed for that by the King (Louis XIV.) and by King James, the latter of whom he unceasingly sought to re-establish. The union of Scotland with England appeared to him a favourable conjuncture, by the despair of that ancient kingdom at seeing itself reduced into a province under the yoke of the English. The Jacobite party remained there; the vexation caused by this forced union had increased it, by the desire felt to break that union with the aid of a King that they would have re-established. Hough, who was aware of the fermentation going on, made several secret journeys to Scotland, and planned an invasion of that country; but, as I have said, for a long time could get no one to listen to him.

The King, indeed, was so tired of such enterprises, that nobody dared to speak to him upon this. All drew back. No one liked to bell the cat. At last, however, Madame de Maintenon being gained over, the King was induced to listen to the project. As soon as his consent was gained to it, another scheme was added to the first. This was to profit by the disorder in which the Spanish Low Countries were

thrown, and to make them revolt against the Imperials at the very moment when the affair of Scotland would bewilder the allies, and deprive them of all support from England. Bergheyck, a man well acquainted with the state of those countries, was consulted, and thought the scheme good. He and the Duc de Vendôme conferred upon it in presence of the King.

After talking over various matters, the discussion fell upon the Meuse, and its position with reference to Maestricht. Vendôme held that the Meuse flowed in a certain direction. Bergheyck opposed him. Vendôme, indignant that a civilian should dare to dispute military movements with him, grew warm. The other remained respectful and cool, but firm. Vendôme laughed at Bergheyck, as at an ignorant fellow who did not know the position of places. Bergheyck maintained his point. Vendôme grew more and more hot. If he was right, what he proposed was easy enough; if wrong, it was impossible. It was in vain that Vendôme pretended to treat with disdain his opponent, Bergheyck was not to be put down, and the King, tired out at last with a discussion upon a simple question of fact, examined the maps. He found at once that Bergheyck was right. Any other than the King would have felt by this what manner of man was this general of his taste, of his heart, and of his confidence; any other than Vendôme would have been confounded; but it was Berghecyk in reality who was so, to see the army in such hands and the blindness of the King for him! He was immediately sent into Flanders to work up a revolt, and he did it so

well, that success seemed certain, dependent, of course, upon success in Scotland.

The preparations for the invasion of that country were at once commenced. Thirty vessels were armed at Dunkerque and in the neighbouring ports. The Chevalier de Forbin was chosen to command the squadron. Four thousand men were brought from Flanders to Dunkerque; and it was given out, that this movement was a mere change of garrison. The secret of the expedition was well kept; but the misfortune was that things were done too slowly. The fleet which depended upon Pontchartrain, was not ready in time, and that which depended upon Chamillart, was still more behind hand. The two ministers threw the fault upon each other; but the truth is, both were to blame. Pontchartrain was more than accused of delaying matters from unwillingness; the other from powerlessness.

Great care was taken that no movement should be seen at Saint Germain. The affair, however, began in time to get noised abroad. A prodigious quantity of arms and clothing for the Scotch had been embarked; the movements by sea and land became only too visible upon the coast. At last, on Wednesday the 6th of March, the King of England set out from St. Germain. He was attended by the Duke of Perth, who had been his sub-preceptor; by the two Hamiltons, by Middleton, and a very few others. But his departure had been postponed too long. At the moment when all were ready to start, people learned with surprise, that the English fleet had appeared in

sight, and was blockading Dunkerque. Our troops, who were already on board ship, were at once landed. The King of England cried out so loudly against this, and proposed so eagerly that an attempt should be made to pass the enemy at all risks, that a fleet was sent out to reconnoitre the enemy, and the troops were re-embarked. But then a fresh mischance happened. The Princess of England had had the measles, and was barely growing convalescent at the time of the departure of the King, her brother. She had been prevented from seeing him, lest he should be attacked by the same complaint. In spite of this precaution, however, it declared itself upon him at Dunkerque, just as the troops were re-embarked. He was in despair, and wished to be wrapped up in blankets and carried on board. The doctors said that it would kill him ; and he was obliged to remain. The worst of it was, that two of five Scotch deputies who had been hidden at Montrouge, near Paris, had been sent into Scotland a fortnight before, to announce the immediate arrival of the King with arms and troops. The movement which it was felt this announcement would create, increased the impatience for departure. At last, on Saturday the 19th of March, the King of England, half cured and very weak, determined to embark in spite of his physicians, and did so. The enemy's vessels had retired ; so, at six o'clock in morning, our ships set sail with a good breeze, and in the midst of a mist, which hid them from view in about an hour.

Forty-eight hours after the departure of our squadron,

twenty-seven English ships of war appeared before Dunkerque. But our fleet was away. The very first night it experienced a furious tempest. The ship in which was the King of England, took shelter afterwards behind the works of Ostend. During the storm, another ship was separated from the squadron, and was obliged to take refuge on the coast of Picardy. This vessel, a frigate, was commanded by Rambure, a lieutenant. As soon as he was able he sailed after the squadron that he believed already in Scotland. He directed his course towards Edinburgh, and found no vessel during all the voyage. As he approached the mouth of the river, he saw around him a number of barques and small vessels that he could not avoid, and that he determined in consequence to approach with as good a grace as possible. The masters of these ships told him that the King was expected with impatience, but that they had no news of him, that they had come out to meet him, and that they would send pilots to Rambure, to conduct him up the river to Edinburgh, where all was hope and joy. Rambure, equally surprised that the squadron which bore the King of England, had not appeared, and of the publicity of his forthcoming arrival, went up towards Edinburgh more and more surrounded by barques, which addressed to him the same language. A gentleman of the country passed from one of these barques upon the frigate. He told Rambure, that the principal noblemen of Scotland had resolved to act together, that these noblemen could count upon more than twenty thousand men ready to take up arms, and that all

the towns awaited only the arrival of the King to proclaim him.

More and more troubled that the squadron did not appear, Rambure, after a time, turned back and went in search of it. As he approached the mouth of the river, which he had so lately entered, he heard a great noise of cannon out at sea, and a short time afterwards he saw many vessels of war there. Approaching more and more, and quitting the river, he distinguished our squadron, chased by twenty-six large ships of war and a number of other vessels, all of which he soon lost sight of, so much was our squadron in advance. He continued on his course in order to join them; but he could not do so until all had passed by the mouth of the river. Then steering clear of the rear-guard of the English ships, he remarked that the English fleet was hotly chasing the ship of the King of England, which ran along the coast, however, amid the fire of cannon and oftentimes of musketry. Rambure tried, for a long time, to profit by the lightness of his frigate to get a-head; but, always cut off by the enemy's vessels, and continually in danger of being taken, he returned to Dunkerque, where he immediately despatched to the Court this sad and disturbing news. He was followed, five or six days after, by the King of England, who returned to Dunkerque on the 7th of April, with his vessels badly knocked about.

It seems that the ship in which was the Prince, after experiencing the storm I have already alluded to, set sail again with its squadron, but twice got out of its reckoning within forty-eight hours; a fact not easy

to understand in a voyage from Ostend to Edinburgh. This circumstance gave time to the English to join them; thereupon the King held a council, and much time was lost in deliberations. When the squadron drew near the river, the enemy was so close upon us, that to enter, without fighting either inside or out, seemed impossible. In this emergency it was suggested, that our ships should go on to Inverness, about eighteen or twenty leagues further off. But this was objected to by Middleton and the Chevalier Forbin, who declared that the King of England was expected only at Edinburgh, and that it was useless to go elsewhere; and accordingly the project was given up, and the ships returned to France.

This return, however, was not accomplished without some difficulty. The enemy's fleet attacked the rear-guard of ours, and after an obstinate combat, took two vessels of war and some other vessels. Among the prisoners made by the English were the Marquis de Lèvi, Lord Griffin, and the two sons of Middleton; who all, after suffering some little bad treatment, were conducted to London.

Lord Griffin was an old Englishman who deserves a word of special mention. A firm Protestant, but much attached to the King of England, he knew nothing of this expedition until after the King's departure. He went immediately in quest of the Queen. With English freedom he reproached her for the little confidence she had had in him, in spite of his services and his constant fidelity, and finished by assuring her that neither his age nor his religion would hinder him from serving the King

to the last drop of his blood. He spoke so feelingly that the Queen was ashamed. After this he went to Versailles, asked M. de Toulouse for a hundred louis and a horse, and without delay rode off to Dunkerque, where he embarked with the others. In London he was condemned to death; but he showed so much firmness and such disdain of death, that his judges were too much ashamed to allow the execution to be carried out. The Queen sent him one respite, then another, although he had never asked for either, and finally he was allowed to remain at liberty in London on parole. He always received fresh respites, and lived in London as if in his own country, well received everywhere. Being informed that these respites would never cease, he lived thus several years, and died very old, a natural death. The other prisoners were equally well treated.

It was in this expedition that the King of England first assumed the title of the Chevalier de St. George, and that his enemies gave him that of the Pretender; both of which have remained to him. He showed much will and firmness, which he spoiled by a docility the result of a bad education, austere and confined, that devotion, ill understood, together with the desire of maintaining him in fear and dependence, caused the Queen (who, with all her sanctity, always wished to dominate) to give him. He asked to serve in the next campaign in Flanders, and wished to go there at once, or remain near Dunkerque. Service was promised him, but he was made to return to St. Germain. Hough, who had been made a peer of Ireland

before starting, preceded him with the journals of the voyage, and that of Forbin, to whom the King gave a thousand crowns pension and ten thousand as a recompense.

The King of England arrived at St. Germain on Friday the 20th of April, and came with the Queen, the following Sunday, to Marly, where our King was. The two Kings embraced each other several times, in the presence of the two Courts. But the visit altogether was a sad one. The Courts, which met in the garden, returned towards the Château, exchanging indifferent words in an indifferent way.

Middleton was strongly suspected of having acquainted the English with our project. They acted, at all events, as if they had been informed of everything, and wished to appear to know nothing. They made a semblance of sending their fleet to escort a convoy to Portugal; they got in readiness the few troops they had in England and sent them towards Scotland; and the Queen, under various pretexts, detained in London, until the affair had failed, the Duke of Hamilton, the most powerful Scotch lord, and the life and soul of the expedition. When all was over, she made no arrests, and wisely avoided throwing Scotland into despair. This conduct much augmented her authority in England, attached all hearts to her, and took away all desire of stirring again by taking away all hope of success. Thus failed a project so well and so secretly conducted until the end, which was pitiable; and with this project failed that of the Low Countries, which was no longer thought of.

The allies uttered loud cries against this attempt on the part of a power they believed at its last gasp, and which, while pretending to seek peace, thought of nothing less than the invasion of Great Britain. The effect of our failure was to bind closer, and to irritate more and more this formidable alliance.

CHAPTER XII.

Death and character of Brissac—Brissac and the Court Ladies—The Duchesse de Bourgogne—Scene at the Carp Basin—King's Selfishness—The King cuts Samuel Bernard's Purse—A vain Capitalist—Story of Léon and Florence the Actress—His Loves with Mdlle. de Roquelaure—Run-away Marriage—Anger of Madame de Roquelaure—A furious Mother—Opinions of the Court—A Mistake—Interference of the King—Fate of the Couple.

Brissac, Major of the Body-guards, died of age and *ennui* about this time, more than eighty years old, at his country-house, to which he had not long retired. The King had made use of him to put the Guards upon that grand military footing they have reached. He had acquired the confidence of the King by his inexorable exactitude, his honesty, and his aptitude. He was a sort of wild boar, who had all the appearance of a bad man, without being so in reality: but his manners were, it must be admitted, harsh and disagreeable. The King, speaking one day of the majors of the troops, said that if they were good, they were sure to be hated.

"If it is necessary to be perfectly hated in order to be a good major," replied M. de Duras, who was behind the King, with the bâton, "behold, Sire, the best major in France!" and he took Brissac, all confusion, by the arm. The King laughed, though he would have thought such a sally very bad in any other; but

M. de Duras had put himself on such a free footing, that he stopped at nothing before the King, and often said the sharpest things. This major had very robust health, and laughed at the doctors—very often, even before the King, at Fagon, whom nobody else would have dared to attack. Fagon replied by disdain, often by anger, and with all his wit was embarrassed. These short scenes were sometimes very amusing,

Brissac, a few years before his retirement, served the Court ladies a nice turn. All through the winter they attended evening prayers on Thursdays and Sundays, because the King went there ; and, under the pretence of reading their prayer-books, had little tapers before them, which cast a light on their faces, and enabled the King to recognise them as he passed. On the evenings when they knew he would not go, scarcely one of them went. One evening, when the King was expected, all the ladies had arrived and were in their places, and the guards were at the doors. Suddenly Brissac appeared in the King's place, lifted his bâton, and cried aloud, "Guards of the King, withdraw, return to your quarters; the King is not coming this evening." The guards withdrew; but after they had proceeded a short distance, were stopped by brigadiers posted for the purpose, and told to return in a few minutes. What Brissac had said was a joke. The ladies at once began to murmur one to another. In a moment or two all the candles were put out, and the ladies, with but few exceptions, left the chapel. Soon after the King arrived, and, much astonished to see so few ladies present, asked how it was that nobody was

there. At the conclusion of the prayers Brissac related what he had done, not without dwelling on the piety of the Court ladies. The King and all who accompanied him laughed heartily. The story soon spread, and these ladies would have strangled Brissac if they had been able.

The Duchesse de Bourgogne being in the family way this spring, was much inconvenienced. The King wished to go to Fontainebleau at the commencement of the fine season, contrary to his usual custom; and had declared this wish. In the mean time he desired to pay visits to Marly. Madame de Bourgogne much amused him; he could not do without her, yet so much movement was not suitable to her state. Madame de Maintenon was uneasy, and Fagon gently intimated his opinion. This annoyed the King, accustomed to restrain himself for nothing, and spoiled by having seen his mistresses travel when big with child, or when just recovering from their confinement, and always in full dress. The hints against going to Marly bothered him, but did not make him give them up. All he would consent to was, that the journey should be put off from the day after Quasimodo to the Wednesday of the following week; but nothing could make him delay his amusement beyond that time, or induce him to allow the Princess to remain at Versailles.

On the following Saturday, as the King was taking a walk after mass, and amusing himself at the carp basin between the Château and the Perspective, we saw the Duchess de Lude coming towards him on foot and all alone, which as no lady was with the King was

a rarity in the morning. We understood that she had something important to say to him, and when he was a short distance from her, we stopped so as to allow him to join her alone. The interview was not long. She went away again, and the King came back towards us, and near the carps without saying a word. Each saw clearly what was in the wind, and nobody was eager to speak. At last the King, when quite close to the basin, looked at the principal people around, and, without addressing anybody said, with an air of vexation, these few words :—

"The Duchesse de Bourgogne is hurt."

M. de la Rochefoucauld at once uttered an exclamation. M. de Bouillon, the Duc de Tresmes, and Maréchal de Boufflers repeated in a low tone the words I have named ; and M. de la Rochefoucauld returning to the charge, declared emphatically that it was the greatest misfortune in the world, and that as she had already wounded herself on other occasions, she might never, perhaps, have any more children.

"And if so," interrupted the King all on a sudden, with anger, "what is that to me? Has she not already a son ; and if he should die, is not the Duc de Berry old enough to marry and have one? What matters it to me who succeeds me,—the one or the other? Are they not all equally my grandchildren?" And immediately, with impetuosity he added, "Thank God, she is wounded, since she was to be so ; and I shall no longer be annoyed in my journeys and in everything I wish to do, by the representations of

doctors and the reasonings of matrons. I shall go and come at my pleasure, and shall be left in peace."

A silence so deep that an ant might have been heard to walk, succeeded this strange outburst. All eyes were lowered; no one scarcely dared to breathe. All remained stupified. Even the domestics and the gardeners stood motionless.

This silence lasted more than a quarter of an hour. The King broke it as he leaned upon a balustrade to speak of a carp. Nobody replied. He addressed himself afterwards on the subject of these carps to domestics, who did not ordinarily join in the conversation. Nothing but carps was spoken of with them. All was languishing, and the King went away some time after. As soon as we dared look at each other out of his sight, our eyes met and told all. Everybody there was for the moment the confidant of his neighbour. We admired—we marvelled—we grieved—we shrugged our shoulders. However distant may be that scene, it is always equally present to me. M. de la Rochefoucauld was in a fury, and this time without being wrong. The chief écuyer was ready to faint with affright; I myself examined everybody with my eyes and ears, and was satisfied with myself for having long since thought that the King loved and cared for himself alone, and was himself his only object in life. This strange discourse sounded far and wide—much beyond Marly.

Let me here relate another anecdote of the King—a trifle I was witness of. It was on the 7th of May, of this year, and at Marly. The King walking round the

gardens, showing them to Bergheyck, and talking with him upon the approaching campaign in Flanders, stopped before one of the pavilions. It was that occupied by Desmarets, who had recently succeeded Chamillart in the direction of the finances, and who was at work within with Samuel Bernard, the famous banker, the richest man in Europe and whose money dealings were the largest. The King observed to Desmarets that he was very glad to see him with M. Bernard; then immediately said to this latter:

"You are just the man never to have seen Marly—come and see it now; I will give you up afterwards to Desmarets."

Bernard followed, and while the walk lasted the King spoke only to Bergheyck and to Bernard, leading them everywhere, and showing them everything with the grace he so well knew how to employ when he desired to overwhelm. I admired, and I was not the only one, this species of prostitution of the King, so niggard of his words, to a man of Bernard's degree. I was not long in learning the cause of it, and I admired to see how low the greatest kings sometimes find themselves reduced.

Our finances just then were exhausted. Desmarets no longer knew of what wood to make a crutch. He had been to Paris knocking at every door. But the most exact engagements had been so often broken that he found nothing but excuses and closed doors. Bernard, like the rest, would advance nothing. Much was due to him. In vain Desmarets represented to him the pressing necessity for money, and the enor-

mous gains he had made out of the King. Bernard remained unshakeable. The King and the minister were cruelly embarrassed. Desmarets said to the King that, after all was said and done, only Samuel Bernard could draw them out of the mess, because it was not doubtful that he had plenty of money everywhere; that the only thing needed was to vanquish his determination, and the obstinacy—even insolence—he had shown; that he was a man crazy with vanity, and capable of opening his purse if the King deigned to flatter him.

It was agreed, therefore, that Desmarets should invite Bernard to dinner—should walk with him—and that the King should come and disturb them as I have related. Bernard was the dupe of this scheme; he returned from his walk with the King enchanted to such an extent that he said he would prefer ruining himself rather than leave in embarrassment a Prince who had just treated him so graciously, and whose eulogiums he uttered with enthusiasm! Desmarets profited by this trick immediately, and drew much more from it than he had proposed to himself.

The Prince de Léon had an adventure just about this time, which made much noise. He was a great, ugly, idle, mischievous fellow, son of the Duc de Rohan, who had given him the title I have just named. He had served in one campaign very indolently, and then quitted the army, under pretence of ill-health, to serve no more. Glib in speech, and with the manners of the great world, he was full of caprices and fancies; although a great gambler and spendthrift, he was

miserly, and cared only for himself. He had been enamoured of Florence, an actress, whom M. d'Orléans had for a long time kept, and by whom he had children, one of whom is now Archbishop of Cambrai. M. de Léon also had several children by this creature, and spent large sums upon her. When he went in place of his father to open the States of Brittany she accompanied him in a coach and six horses, with a ridiculous scandal. His father was in agony lest he should marry her. He offered to insure her five thousand francs a-year pension, and to take care of their children, if M. de Léon would quit her. But M. de Léon would not hear of this, and his father accordingly complained to the King. The King summoned M. de Léon into his cabinet; but the young man pleaded his cause so well there, that he gained pity rather than condemnation. Nevertheless, La Florence was carried away from a pretty little house at the Ternes, near Paris, where M. de Léon kept her, and was put in a convent. M. de Léon became furious; for some time he would neither see nor speak of his father or mother, and repulsed all idea of marriage.

At last, however, no longer hoping to see his actress, he not only consented, but wished to marry. His parents were delighted at this, and at once looked about for a wife for him. Their choice fell upon the eldest daughter of the Duc de Roquelaure, who, although humpbacked and extremely ugly, was to be very rich some day, and was, in fact, a very good match. The affair had been arranged and concluded up to a certain point, when all was broken off, in con-

sequence of the haughty obstinacy with which the Duchesse de Roquelaure demanded a larger sum with M. de Léon than M. de Rohan chose to give.

The young couple were in despair: M. de Léon, lest his father should always act in this way, as an excuse for giving him nothing; the young lady, because she feared she should rot in a convent, through the avarice of her mother, and never marry. She was more than twenty-four years of age; he was more than eight and twenty. She was in the convent of the Daughters of the Cross in the Faubourg St. Antoine.

As soon as M. de Léon learnt that the marriage was broken off, he hastened to the convent; and told all to Mademoiselle de Roquelaure; played the passionate, the despairing; said, that if they waited for their parents' consent they would never marry, and that she would rot in her convent. He proposed, therefore, that, in spite of their parents, they should marry and become their own guardians. She agreed to this project, and he went away in order to execute it.

One of the most intimate friends of Madame de Roquelaure was Madame de la Vieuville, and she was the only person (excepting Madame de Roquelaure herself) to whom the Superior of the convent had permission to confide Mademoiselle de Roquelaure. Madame de la Vieuville often came to see Mademoiselle de Roquelaure to take her out, and sometimes sent for her. M. de Léon was made acquainted with this, and took his measures accordingly. He procured a coach of the same size, shape, and fittings as that of Madame de la Vieuville, with her arms upon it, and with three

servants in her livery; he counterfeited a letter in her handwriting and with her seal, and sent this coach with a lackey well-instructed to carry the letter to the convent, on Tuesday morning, the 29th of May, at the hour Madame de la Vieuville was accustomed to send for them.

Mademoiselle de Roquelaure, who had been let into the scheme, carried the letter to the Superior of the convent, and said Madame de la Vieuville had sent for her. Had the Superior any message to send?

The Superior, accustomed to these invitations, did not even look at the letter, but gave her consent at once. Mademoiselle de Roquelaure, accompanied solely by her governess, left the convent immediately, and entered the coach, which drove off directly. At the first turning it stopped, and the Prince de Léon, who had been in waiting, jumped in. The governess at this began to cry out with all her might; but at the very first sound M. de Léon thrust a handkerchief into her mouth and stifled the noise. The coachman meanwhile lashed his horses, and the vehicle went off at full speed to Bruyères, near Ménilmontant, the country-house of the Duc de Lorges, my brother-in-law, and friend of the Prince de Léon, and who, with the Comte de Rieux, awaited the runaway pair.

An interdicted and wandering priest was in waiting, and as soon as they arrived married them. My brother-in-law then led these nice young people into a fine chamber, where they were undressed, put to bed, and left alone for two or three hours. A good meal was then given to them, after which the bride was put

into the coach, with her attendant, who was in despair, and driven back to the convent.

Mademoiselle de Roquelaure at once went deliberately to the Superior, told her all that had happened, and then calmly went into her chamber and wrote a fine letter to her mother, giving her an account of her marriage, and asking for pardon; the Superior of the convent, the attendants, and all the household being, meanwhile, in the utmost emotion at what had occurred.

The rage of the Duchesse de Roquelaure at this incident may be imagined. In her first unreasoning fury, she went to Madame de la Vieuville who, all in ignorance of what had happened, was utterly at a loss to understand her stormy and insulting reproaches. At last Madame de Roquelaure saw that her friend was innocent of all connection with the matter, and turned the current of her wrath upon M. de Léon, against whom she felt the more indignant, inasmuch as he had treated her with much respect and attention since the rupture, and had thus, to some extent, gained her heart. Against her daughter she was also indignant, not only for what she had done, but because she had exhibited much gaiety and freedom of spirit at the marriage repast, and had diverted the company by some songs.

The Duc and Duchesse de Rohan were on their side equally furious, although less to be pitied, and made a strange uproar. Their son, troubled to know how to extricate himself from this affair, had recourse to his aunt, Soubise, so as to assure himself of the King.

She sent him to Pontchartrain to see the chancellor. M. de Léon saw him the day after this fine marriage, at five o'clock in the morning, as he was dressing. The chancellor advised him to do all he could to gain the pardon of his father and of Madame de Roquelaure. But he had scarcely begun to speak, when Madame de Roquelaure sent word to say, that she was close at hand, and wished the chancellor to come and see her. He did so, and she immediately poured out all her griefs to him, saying that she came, not to ask his advice, but to state her complaint as to a friend (they were very intimate), and as to the chief officer of Justice to demand justice of him. When he attempted to put in a word on behalf of M. de Léon, her fury burst out anew; she would not listen to his words, but drove off to Marly, where she had an interview with Madame de Maintenon, and by her was presented to the King.

As soon as she was in his presence, she fell down on her knees before him, and demanded justice in its fullest extent against M. de Léon. The King raised her with the gallantry of a prince to whom she had not been indifferent, and sought to console her; but as she still insisted upon justice, he asked her if she knew fully what she asked for, which was nothing less than the head of M. de Léon. She redoubled her intreaties, notwithstanding this information, so that the King at last promised her that she should have complete justice. With that, and many compliments, he quitted her, and passed into his own rooms with a very serious air, and without stopping for anybody.

The news of this interview, and of what had taken place, soon spread through the chamber. Scarcely had people begun to pity Madame de Roquelaure, than some, by aversion for the grand imperial airs of this poor mother,—the majority, seized by mirth at the idea of a creature, well-known to be very ugly and hump-backed, being carried off by such an ugly gallant,—burst out laughing, even to tears, and with an uproar completely scandalous. Madame de Maintenon abandoned herself to mirth, like the rest, and corrected the others at last, by saying it was not very charitable, in a tone that could impose upon no one.

Madame de Saint Simon and I, were at Paris. We knew with all Paris of this affair, but were ignorant of the place of the marriage and the part M. de Lorges had had in it, when the third day after the adventure I was startled out of my sleep at five o'clock in the morning, and saw my curtains and my windows open at the same time, and Madame de Saint Simon and her brother (M. de Lorges) before me. They related to me all that had occurred, and then went away to consult with a skilful person what course to adopt, leaving me to dress. I never saw a man so crest-fallen as M. de Lorges. He had confessed what he had done to a clever lawyer, who had much frightened him. After quitting him, he had hastened to us to make us go and see Pontchartrain. The most serious things are sometimes accompanied with the most ridiculous. M. de Lorges upon arriving knocked at the door of a little room which preceded the chamber of Madame de Saint Simon. My daughter was rather unwell.

Madame de Saint Simon thought she was worse, and supposing it was I who had knocked, ran and opened the door. At the sight of her brother she ran back to her bed, to which he followed her, in order to relate his disaster. She rang for the windows to be opened, in order that she might see better. It so happened, that she had taken the evening before a new servant, a country-girl of sixteen, who slept in the little room. M. de Lorges, in a hurry to be off, told this girl to make haste in opening the windows, and then to go away and close the door. At this, the simple girl, all amazed, took her robe and her cotillon, and went up stairs to an old chamber-maid, awoke her, and with much hesitation told her what had just happened, and that she had left by the bedside of Madame de Saint Simon a fine gentleman, very young, all powdered, curled, and decorated, who had driven her very quickly out of the chamber. She was all of a tremble, and much astonished. She soon learnt who he was. The story was told to us, and in spite of our disquietude, much diverted us.

We hurried away to the chancellor, and he advised the priest, the witnesses to the signatures of the marriage, and, in fact, all concerned, to keep out of the way, except M. de Lorges, whom he assured us had nothing to fear. We went afterwards to Chamillart, whom we found much displeased, but in little alarm. The King had ordered an account to be drawn up of the whole affair. Nevertheless, in spite of the uproar made on all sides, people began to see that the King would not abandon to public dishonour the daughter

of Madame de Roquelaure, nor doom to the scaffold or to civil death in foreign countries the nephew of Madame de Soubise.

Friends of M. and Madame de Roquelaure tried to arrange matters. They represented that it would be better to accept the marriage as it was than to expose a daughter to cruel dishonour. Strange enough, the Duc and Duchesse de Rohan were the most stormy. They wished to drive a very hard bargain in the matter, and made proposals so out of the way, that nothing could have been arranged but for the King. He did what he had never done before in all his life; he entered into all the details; he begged, then commanded as master; he had separate interviews with the parties concerned; and finally appointed the Duc d'Aumont and the chancellor to draw up the conditions of the marriage.

As Madame de Rohan, even after this, still refused to give her consent, the King sent for her, and said that if she and her husband did not at once give in, he would make the marriage valid by his own sovereign authority. Finally, after so much noise, anguish, and trouble, the contract was signed by the two families, assembled at the house of the Duchesse de Roquelaure. The banns were published, and the marriage took place at the church of the Convent of the Cross, where Mademoiselle de Roquelaure had been confined since her beautiful marriage, guarded night and day by five or six nuns. She entered the church by one door, Prince de Léon by another; not a compliment or a word passed between them; the curate said mass; married them; they

mounted a coach, and drove off to the house of a friend some leagues from Paris. They paid for their folly by a cruel indigence which lasted all their lives, neither of them having survived the Duc de Rohan, Monsieur de Roquelaure, or Madame de Roquelaure. They left several children.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Duc d'Orleans in Spain—Offends Madame des Ursins and Madame de Maintenon—Laziness of M. de Vendôme in Flanders—Battle of Oudenarde—Defeat and Disasters—Difference of M. de Vendôme and the Duc de Bourgogne.

THE war this year proceeded much as before. M. d'Orleans went to Spain again. Before taking the field he stopped at Madrid to arrange matters. There he found nothing prepared, and everything in disorder. He was compelled to work day after day, for many hours, in order to obtain the most necessary supplies. This is what accounted for a delay which was maliciously interpreted at Paris into love for the Queen. M. le Duc was angry at the idleness in which he was kept; even Madame la Duchesse, who hated him, because she had formerly loved him too well, industriously circulated this report, which was believed at Court, in the city, even in foreign countries, everywhere, save in Spain, where the truth was too well known. It was while he was thus engaged that he gave utterance to a pleasantry that made Madame de Maintenon and Madame des Ursins his two most bitter enemies for ever afterwards.

One evening he was at table with several French and

Spanish gentlemen, all occupied with his vexation against Madame des Ursins, who governed everything, and who had not thought of even the smallest thing for the campaign. The supper and the wine somewhat affected M. d'Orleans. Still full of his vexation, he took a glass, and, looking at the company, made an allusion in a toast to the two women, one the captain, the other the lieutenant, who governed France and Spain, and that in so coarse and yet humorous a manner, that it struck at once the imagination of the guests. No comment was made, but everybody burst out laughing, sense of drollery overcoming prudence, for it was well known that the she-captain was Madame de Maintenon, and the she-lieutenant Madame des Ursins. The health was drunk, although the words were not repeated, and the scandal was strange.

Half an hour at most after this, Madame des Ursins was informed of what had taken place. She knew well who were meant by the toast, and was transported with rage. She at once wrote an account of the circumstance to Madame de Maintenon, who, for her part, was quite as furious. *Inde iræ.* They never pardoned M. d'Orleans, and we shall see how very nearly they succeeded in compassing his death. Until then, Madame de Maintenon had neither liked nor disliked M. d'Orleans. Madame des Ursins had omitted nothing in order to please him. From that moment they swore the ruin of this prince. All the rest of the King's life M. d'Orleans did not fail to find that Madame de Maintenon was an implacable and cruel enemy. The sad state to which she succeeded in reducing him

influenced him during all the rest of his life. As for Madame des Ursins, he soon found a change in her manner. She endeavoured that everything should fail that passed through his hands. There are some wounds that can never be healed; and it must be admitted that the Duc's toast inflicted one especially of that sort. He felt this; did not attempt any reconciliation; and followed his usual course. I know not if he ever repented of what he had said, whatever cause he may have had, so droll did it seem to him, but he has many times spoken of it since to me, laughing with all his might. I saw all the sad results which might arise from his speech, and nevertheless, while reproaching M. d'Orleans, I could not help laughing myself, so well, so simply, and so wittily expressed was his ridicule of the government on this and the other side of the Pyrenees.

At last, M. le Duc d'Orleans found means to enter upon his campaign, but was so ill-provided, that he never was supplied with more than a fortnight's subsistence in advance. He obtained several small successes; but these were more than swallowed up by a fatal loss in another direction. The island of Sardinia, which was then under the Spanish Crown, was lost through the misconduct of the viceroy, the Duke of Veragua, and taken possession of by the troops of the Archduke. In the month of October, the island of Minorca also fell into the hands of the Archduke. Port Mahon made but little resistance; so that with this conquest and Gibraltar, the English found themselves able to rule in the Mediterranean, to

winter entire fleets there, and to blockade all the ports of Spain upon that sea. Leaving Spain in this situation, let us turn to Flanders.

Early in July, we took Ghent and Bruges by surprise, and the news of these successes was received with the most unbridled joy at Fontainebleau. It appeared easy to profit by these two conquests, obtained without difficulty, by passing the Escaut, burning Oudenarde, closing the country to the enemies, and cutting them off from all supplies. Ours were very abundant, and came by water, with a camp that could not be attacked. M. de Vendôme agreed to all this, and alleged nothing against it. There was only one difficulty in the way,—his idleness, and unwillingness to move from quarters where he was comfortable. He wished to enjoy those quarters as long as possible, and maintained, therefore, that these movements would be just as good if delayed. Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne maintained on the contrary, with all the army—even the favourites of M. de Vendôme—that it would be better to execute the operation at once, that there was no reason for delay, and that delay might prove disastrous. He argued in vain. Vendôme disliked fatigue and change of quarters. They interfered with the daily life he was accustomed to lead, and which I have elsewhere described. He would not move.

Marlborough clearly seeing that M. de Vendôme did not at once take advantage of his position, determined to put it out of his power to do so. To reach Oudenarde, Marlborough had a journey to make of twenty-five leagues. Vendôme was so placed that he could

have gained it in six leagues at the most. Marlborough put himself in motion with so much diligence that he stole three forced marches before Vendôme had the slightest suspicion or information of them. The news reached him in time, but he treated it with contempt, according to his custom, assuring himself that he should outstrip the enemy by setting out the next morning. Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne pressed him to start that evening; such as dared represented to him the necessity and the importance of doing so. All was vain—in spite of repeated information of the enemy's march. The neglect was such that bridges had not been thought of for a little brook at the head of the camp, which it was necessary to cross.

On the next day, Wednesday, the 11th of July, a party of our troops, under the command of Biron, which had been sent on in advance to the Escaut, discovered, after passing it as they could, for the bridges were not yet made, all the army of the enemy bending round towards them, the rear of their columns touching at Oudenarde, where they also had crossed. Biron at once despatched a messenger to the Princes and to M. de Vendôme to inform them of this, and to ask for orders. Vendôme, annoyed by information so different to what he expected, maintained that it could not be true. As he was disputing, an officer arrived from Biron to confirm the news; but this only irritated Vendôme anew, and made him more obstinate. A third messenger arrived, and then M. de Vendôme, still affecting disbelief of the news sent him, flew in a passion, but nevertheless mounted his horse, saying that all this

was the work of the devil, and that such diligence was impossible. He sent orders to Biron to attack the enemy, promising to support him immediately. He told the Princes, at the same time, to gently follow with the whole of the army, while he placed himself at the head of his columns, and pushed on briskly to Biron.

Biron meanwhile placed his troops as well as he could, on ground very unequal and much cut up. He wished to execute the order he had received, less from any hopes of success in a combat so vastly disproportioned, than to secure himself from the blame of a General so ready to censure those who did not follow his instructions. But he was advised so strongly not to take so hazardous a step, that he refrained. Maréchal Matignon, who arrived soon after, indeed specially prohibited him from acting.

While this was passing, Biron heard sharp firing on his left, beyond the village. He hastened there, and found an encounter of infantry going on. He sustained it as well as he could, whilst the enemy were gaining ground on the left, and the ground being difficult (there was a ravine there) the enemy were kept at bay until M. de Vendôme came up. The troops he brought were all out of breath. As soon as they arrived they threw themselves amidst the hedges, nearly all in columns, and sustained thus the attacks of the enemies, and an engagement which every moment grew hotter, without having the means to arrange themselves in any order. The columns that arrived from time to time to the relief of these were

as out of breath as the others, and were at once sharply charged by the enemies, who, being extended in lines and in order, knew well how to profit by our disorder. The confusion was very great: the new comers had no time to rally; there was a long interval between the platoons engaged and those meant to sustain them; the cavalry and the household troops were mixed up pell-mell with the infantry, which increased the disorder to such a point that our troops no longer recognised each other. This enabled the enemy to fill up the ravine with fascines sufficient to enable them to pass it, and allowed the rear of their army to make a grand tour by our right, to gain the head of the ravine, and take us in flank there.

Towards this same right were the Princes, who for some time had been looking from a mill at so strange a combat, so disadvantageously commenced. As soon as our troops saw pouring down upon them others much more numerous, they gave way towards their left with so much promptitude that the attendants of the Princes became mixed up with their masters, and all were hurried away towards the thick of the fight, with a rapidity and confusion that were indecent. The Princes showed themselves everywhere, and in places the most exposed, displaying much valour and coolness, encouraging the men, praising the officers, asking the principal officers what was to be done, and telling M. de Vendôme what they thought.

The inequality of the ground that the enemies found in advancing, after having driven in our right, enabled

our men to rally and to resist. But this resistance was of short duration. Every one had been engaged in hand-to-hand combats; every one was worn out with lassitude and despair of success, and a confusion so general and so unheard-of. The household troops owed their escape to the mistake of one of the enemy's officers, who carried an order to the red coats, thinking them his own men. He was taken, and seeing that he was about to share the peril with our troops, warned them that they were going to be surrounded. They retired in some disorder, and so avoided this.

The disorder increased, however, every moment. Nobody recognised his troop. All were pell-mell,—cavalry, infantry, dragoons; not a battalion, not a squadron together, and all in confusion, one upon the other.

Night came. We had lost much ground, one-half of the army had not finished arriving. In this sad situation the Princes consulted with M. de Vendôme as to what was to be done. He, furious at being so terribly out of his reckoning, affronted everybody. Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne wished to speak; but Vendôme, intoxicated with choler and authority, closed his mouth, by saying to him in an imperious voice before everybody, "That he came to the army only on condition of obeying him." These enormous words, pronounced at a moment in which everybody felt so terribly the weight of the obedience rendered to his idleness and obstinacy, made everybody tremble with indignation. The young Prince to whom they

were addressed, hesitated, mastered himself, and kept silence. Vendôme went on declaring that the battle was not lost—that it could be recommenced the next morning, when the rest of the army had arrived, and so on. No one of consequence cared to reply.

From every side soon came information, however, that the disorder was extreme. Puységur, Matignon, Sousternon, Cheladet, Puyguyon, all brought the same news. Vendôme, seeing that it was useless to resist all this testimony, and beside himself with rage, cried, " Oh, very well, gentlemen ! I see clearly what you wish. We must retire, then ;" and looking at Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne, he added, " I know you have long wished to do so, Monseigneur."

These words, which could not fail to be taken in a double sense, were pronounced exactly as I relate them, and were emphasised in a manner to leave no doubt as to their signification. Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne remained silent as before, and for some time the silence was unbroken. At last, Puységur interrupted it, by asking how the retreat was to be executed. Each, then, spoke confusedly. Vendôme, in his turn, kept silence from vexation or embarrassment ; then he said they must march to Ghent, without adding how, or anything else.

The day had been very fatiguing ; the retreat was long and perilous. The Princes mounted their horses, and took the road to Ghent. Vendôme set out without giving any orders, or seeing to anything. The general officers returned to their posts, and of them-

selves gave the order for retreat. Yet so great was the confusion, that the Chevalier Rosel, lieutenant-general, at the head of a hundred squadrons, received no orders. In the morning he found himself with his hundred squadrons, which had been utterly forgotten. He at once commenced his march; but to retreat in full daylight was very difficult, as he soon found. He had to sustain the attacks of the enemy during several hours of his march.

Elsewhere, also, the difficulty of retreating was great. Fighting went on at various points all night, and the enemy were on the alert. Some of the troops of our right, while debating as to the means of retreat, found they were about to be surrounded by the enemy. The Vidame of Amiens saw that not a moment was to be lost. He cried to the light horse, of which he was Captain, " Follow me," and pierced his way through a line of the enemy's cavalry. He then found himself in front of a line of infantry, which fired upon him, but opened to give him passage. At the same moment, the household troops and others, profiting by a movement so bold, followed the Vidame and his men, and all escaped together to Ghent, led on by the Vidame, to whose sense and courage the safety of these troops was owing.

M. de Vendôme arrived at Ghent between seven and eight o'clock in the morning. Even at this moment he did not forget his disgusting habits, and as soon as he set foot to ground . . . . in sight of all the troops as they came by,—then at once went to bed, without giving any orders, or seeing to anything, and remained

more than thirty hours without rising, in order to repose himself after his fatigues. He learnt that Monseigneur de Bourgogne and the army had pushed on to Lawendeghem; but he paid no attention to it, and continued to sup and to sleep at Ghent several days running, without attending to anything.

CHAPTER XIV.

Conflicting Reports—Attacks on the Duc de Bourgogne—The Duchesse de Bourgogne acts against Vendôme—Weakness of the Duc—Cunning of Vendôme—The Siege of Lille—Anxiety for a battle—Its delay—Conduct of the King and Monseigneur—A picture of royal family feeling—The Siege of Lille—Conduct of the Maréchal de Boufflers.

As soon as Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne arrived at Lawendeghem, he wrote a short letter to the King, and referred him for details to M. de Vendôme. But at the same time he wrote to the Duchesse, very clearly expressing to her where the fault lay. M. de Vendôme, on his side, wrote to the King, and tried to persuade him that the battle had not been disadvantageous to us. A short time afterwards, he wrote again, telling the King that he could have beaten the enemies had he been sustained; and that, if contrary to his advice, retreat had not been determined on, he would certainly have beaten them the next day. For the details he referred to Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne.

I had always feared that some ill-fortune would fall to the lot of Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne if he served under M. de Vendôme at the army. When I first learnt that he was going to Flanders with M. de Vendôme, I expressed my apprehensions to M. de Beauvilliers, who treated them as unreasonable and ridiculous. He soon had good cause to admit that

I had not spoken without justice. Our disasters at Oudenarde were very great. We had many men and officers killed and wounded, four thousand men and seven hundred officers taken prisoners, and a prodigious quantity missing and dispersed. All these losses were, as I have shown, entirely due to the laziness and inattention of M. de Vendôme. Yet the friends of that General—and he had many at the Court and in the army—actually had the audacity to lay the blame upon Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne. This was what I had foreseen, viz., that M. de Vendôme, in case any misfortune occurred, would be sure to throw the burden of it upon Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne.

Albéroni, who, as I have said, was one of M. de Vendôme's creatures, published a deceitful and impudent letter, in which he endeavoured to prove that M. de Vendôme had acted throughout like a good general, but that he had been thwarted by Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne. This letter was distributed everywhere, and well served the purpose for which it was intended. Another writer, Campistron—a poor, starving poet, ready to do anything to live—went further. He wrote a letter, in which Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne was personally attacked in the tenderest points, and in which Maréchal Matignon was said to merit a court-martial for having counselled retreat. This letter, like the other, although circulated with more precaution, was shown even in the cafés and in the theatres; in the public places of gambling and debauchery; on the promenades, and amongst the newsvenders.

Copies of it were even shown in the provinces, and in foreign countries; but always with much circumspection. Another letter soon afterwards appeared, apologising for M. de Vendôme. This was written by Comte d'Evreux, and was of much the same tone as the two others.

A powerful cabal was in fact got up against Monseigneur de Bourgogne, Vaudevilles, verses, atrocious songs against him, ran all over Paris and the provinces with a licence and a rapidity that no one checked; while at the Court, the libertines and the fashionables applauded; so that in six days it was thought disgraceful to speak with any measure of this Prince, even in his father's house.

Madame de Bourgogne could not witness all this uproar against her husband, without feeling sensibly affected by it. She had been made acquainted by Monseigneur de Bourgogne with the true state of the case. She saw her own happiness and reputation at stake. Though very gentle, and still more timid, the grandeur of the occasion raised her above herself. She was cruelly wounded by the insults of Vendôme to her husband, and by all the atrocities and falsehoods his emissaries published. She gained Madame de Maintenon, and the first result of this step was, that the King censured Chamillart for not speaking of the letters in circulation, and ordered him to write to Albéroni and d'Evreux (Campistron, strangely enough, was forgotten), commanding them to keep silence for the future.

The cabal was amazed to see Madame de Maintenon

on the side of Madame de Bourgogne, while M. du Maine (who was generally in accord with Madame de Maintenon) was for M. de Vendôme. They concluded that the King had been led away, but that if they held firm, his partiality for M. de Vendôme, for M. du Maine, and for bastardy in general, would bring him round to them. In point of fact, the King was led now one way, and now another, with a leaning always towards M. de Vendôme.

Soon after this, Chamillart, who was completely of the party of M. de Vendôme, thought fit to write a letter to Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne, in which he counselled him to live on good terms with his general. Madame de Bourgogne never forgave Chamillart this letter, and was always annoyed with her husband that he acted upon it. His religious sentiments induced him to do so. Vendôme so profited by the advances made to him by the young Prince, that he audaciously brought Albéroni with him when he visited Monseigneur de Bourgogne. This weakness of Monseigneur de Bourgogne lost him many friends, and made his enemies more bold than ever. Madame de Bourgogne, however, did not despair. She wrote to her husband that for M. de Vendôme she had more aversion and contempt than for any one else in the world, and that nothing would make her forget what he had done. We shall see with what courage she knew how to keep her word.

While the discussions upon the battle of Oudenarde were yet proceeding, a league was formed with France against the Emperor by all the states of Italy. The

King (Louis XIV.) accepted, however, too late, a project he himself ought to have proposed and executed. He lost perhaps the most precious opportunity he had had during all his reign. The step he at last took was so apparent that it alarmed the allies, and put them on their guard. Except Flanders, they did nothing in any other spot, and turned all their attention to Italy.

Let us return, however, to Flanders.

Prince Eugène, with a large booty gathered in Artois and elsewhere, had fixed himself at Brussels. He wished to bear off his spoils, which required more than five thousand waggons to carry it, and which consisted in great part of provisions, worth three million five hundred thousand francs, and set out with them to join the army of the Duke of Marlborough. Our troops could not, of course, be in ignorance of this. M. de Vendôme wished to attack the convoy with half his troops. The project seemed good, and, in case of success, would have brought results equally honourable and useful. Monseigneur de Bourgogne, however, opposed the attack, I know not why; and M. de Vendôme, so obstinate until then, gave in to him in this case. His object was to ruin the Prince utterly, for allowing such a good chance to escape, the blame resting entirely upon him. Obstinacy and audacity had served M. de Vendôme at Oudenarde: he expected no less a success now from his deference.

Some anxiety was felt just about this time for Lille, which it was feared the enemy would lay siege to. Boufflers went to command there, at his own request,

and found the place very ill-garrisoned with raw troops, many of whom had never smelt powder. M. de Vendôme, however, laughed at the idea of the siege of Lille, as something mad and ridiculous. Nevertheless, the town was invested on the 12th of August, as the King duly learned on the 14th. Even then, flattery did its work. The friends of Vendôme declared that such an enterprise was the best thing that could happen to France, as the besiegers, inferior in numbers to our army, were sure to be miserably beaten. M. de Vendôme, in the mean time, did not budge from the post he had taken up near Ghent. The King wrote to him to go with his army to the relief of Lille. M. de Vendôme still delayed; another courier was sent with the same result. At this, the King losing temper, despatched another courier, with orders to Monseigneur de Bourgogne, to lead the army to Lille, if M. de Vendôme refused to do so. At this, M. de Vendôme awoke from his lethargy. He set out for Lille, but took the longest road, and dawdled as long as he could on the way, stopping five days at Mons Puenelle, amongst other places.

The agitation, meanwhile, in Paris, was extreme. The King demanded news of the siege from his courtiers, and could not understand why no couriers arrived. It was generally expected that some decisive battle had been fought. Each day increased the uneasiness. The Princes and the principal noblemen of the Court were at the army. Every one at Versailles feared for the safety of a relative or friend. Prayers were offered everywhere. Madame de Bourgogne passed

whole nights in the chapel, when people thought her in bed, and drove her women to despair. Following her example, ladies who had husbands at the army stirred not from the churches. Gaming, conversation ceased. Fear was painted upon every face, and seen in every speech, without shame. If a horse passed a little quickly, everybody ran without knowing where. The apartments of Chamillart were crowded with lacqueys, even into the street, sent by people desiring to be informed of the moment that a courier arrived; and this terror and uncertainty lasted nearly a month. The provinces were even more troubled than Paris. The King wrote to the Bishop, in order that they should offer up prayers in terms which suited with the danger of the time. It may be judged what was the general impression and alarm.

It is true, that in the midst of this trepidation, the partisans of M. de Vendôme affected to pity that poor Prince Eugène, and to declare that he must inevitably fail in his undertaking; but these discourses did not impose upon me. I knew what kind of enemies we had to deal with, and I foresaw the worst results from the idleness and inattention of M. de Vendôme. One evening, in presence of Chamillart and five or six others, annoyed by the conversation which passed, I offered to bet four pistoles that there would be no general battle, and that Lille would be taken without being relieved. This strange proposition excited much surprise, and caused many questions to be addressed to me. I would explain nothing at all; but sustained my proposal in the English manner, and my

bet was taken ; Cani who accepted it, thanking me for the present of four pistoles I was making him, as he said. The stakes were placed in the hand of Chamillart.

By the next day, the news of my bet had spread abroad, and made a frightful uproar. The partisans of M. de Vendôme, knowing I was no friend to them, took this opportunity to damage me in the eyes of the King. They so far succeeded that I entirely lost favour with him, without however suspecting it, for more than two months. All that I could do then, was to let the storm pass over my head and keep silent, so as not to make matters worse.

Meanwhile, M. de Vendôme continued the inactive policy he had hitherto followed. In despite of reiterated advice from the King, he took no steps to attack the enemy. Monseigneur de Bourgogne was for doing so, but Vendôme would make no movement. As before, too, he contrived to throw all the blame of his inactivity upon Monseigneur de Bourgogne. He succeeded so well in making this believed, that his followers in the army cried out against the followers of Monseigneur de Bourgogne wherever they appeared. Chamillart was sent by the King to report upon the state and position of our troops, and if a battle had taken place and proved unfavourable to us, to prevent such sad results as had taken place after Ramillies.

Chamillart came back on the 18th of Sept. No battle had been fought, but M. de Vendôme felt sure, he said, of cutting off all supplies from the enemy, and thus compelling them to raise the siege.

The King had need of these intervals of consolation

and hope. Master as he might be of his words and of his features, he profoundly felt the powerlessness to resist his enemies that he fell into day by day. What I have related about Samuel Bernard, the banker, to whom he almost did the honours of his gardens at Marly, in order to draw from him the assistance he had refused, is a great proof of this. It was much remarked at Fontainebleau, just as Lille was invested, that, the city of Paris coming to harangue him on the occasion of the oath taken by Bignon, new *Prévôt des Marchands*, he replied, not only with kindness, but that he made use of the term "gratitude for his good city," and that in doing so he lost countenance, — two things which during all his reign had never escaped him. On the other hand, he sometimes had intervals of firmness, which edified less than they surprised. When everybody at the Court was in the anxiety I have already described, he offended them by going out every day hunting or walking, so that they could not know, until after his return, the news which might arrive when he was out.

As for Monseigneur, he seemed altogether exempt from anxiety. After Ramillies, when everybody was waiting for the return of Chamillart, to learn the truth, Monseigneur went away to dine at Meudon, saying he should learn the news soon enough. From this time he showed no more interest in what was passing. When news was brought that Lille was invested, he turned on his heel before the letter announcing it had been read to the end. The King called him back to hear the rest. He returned and heard it. The reading

finished, he went away, without offering a word. Entering the apartments of the Princesse de Conti, he found there Madame d'Espinoy, who had much property in Flanders, and who had wished to take a trip there.

"Madame," said he, smiling, as he arrived, "how would you do just now to get to Lille?" And at once made them acquainted with the investment. These things really wounded the Princesse de Conti. Arriving at Fontainebleau one day, during the movements of the army, Monseigneur set to work reciting, for amusement, a long list of strange names of places in the forest.

"Dear me, Monseigneur," cried she, "what a good memory you have! What a pity it is loaded with such things only!" If he felt the reproach, he did not profit by it.

As for Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, Monseigneur (his father) was ill-disposed towards him, and readily swallowed all that was said in his dispraise. Monseigneur had no sympathy with the piety of his son; it constrained and bothered him. The cabal well profited by this. They succeeded to such an extent in alienating the father from the son, that it is only strict truth to say that no one dared to speak well of Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne in the presence of Monseigneur. From this it may be imagined what was the licence and freedom of speech elsewhere against this Prince. They reached such a point, indeed, that the King, not daring to complain publicly against the Prince de Conti, who hated Vendôme, for speaking in favour of Monseigneur

de Bourgogne, reprimanded him sharply in reality for having done so, but ostensibly because he had talked about the affairs of Flanders at his sister's. Madame de Bourgogne did all she could to turn the current that was setting in against her husband; and in this she was assisted by Madame de Maintenon, who was annoyed to the last degree to see that other people had more influence over the King than she had.

The siege of Lille meanwhile continued, and at last it began to be seen that, instead of attempting to fight a grand battle, the wisest course would be to throw assistance into the place. An attempt was made to do so, but it was now too late.

The besieged, under the guidance of Maréchal Boufflers, who watched over all, and attended to all, in a manner that gained him all hearts, made a gallant and determined resistance. A volume would be necessary in order to relate all the marvels of capacity and valour displayed in this defence. Our troops disputed the ground inch by inch. They repulsed, three times running, the enemy from a mill, took it the third time, and burnt it. They sustained an attack, in three places at once, of ten thousand men, from nine o'clock in the evening to three o'clock in the morning, without giving way. They re-captured the sole traverse the enemy had been able to take from them. They drove out the besieged from the projecting angles of the counterscarp, which they had kept possession of for eight days. They twice repulsed seven thousand men who attacked their covered-way and an outwork; at

the third attack they lost an angle of the outwork, but remained masters of all the rest.

So many attacks and engagements terribly weakened the garrison. On the 28th of September some assistance was sent to the besieged by the daring of the Chevalier de Luxembourg. It enabled them to sustain with vigour the fresh attacks that were directed against them, to repulse the enemy, and, by a grand sortie, to damage some of their works, and kill many of their men. But all was in vain. The enemy returned again and again to the attack. Every attempt to cut off their supplies failed. Finally, on the 23rd of October, a capitulation was signed. The place had become untenable; three new breaches had been made on the 20th and 21st; powder and ammunition were failing; the provisions were almost all eaten up: there was nothing for it but to give in.

Maréchal Boufflers obtained all he asked, and retired into the citadel with all the prisoners of war, after two months of resistance. He offered discharge to all the soldiers who did not wish to enter the citadel. But not one of the six thousand he had left to him accepted it. They were all ready for a new resistance, and when their chief appeared among them their joy burst out in the most flattering praises of him. It was on Friday, the 26th of October, that they shut themselves up in the citadel.

The enemy opened their trenches before the citadel on the 29th of October. On the 7th of November they made a grand attack, but were repulsed with considerable loss. But they did not flinch from their

work, and Boufflers began to see that he could not long hold out. By the commencement of December he had only twenty thousand pounds of powder left; very little of other munitions, and still less food. In the town and the citadel they had eaten eight hundred horses. Boufflers, as soon as the others were reduced to this food, had it served upon his own table, and ate of it like the rest. The King, learning in what state these soldiers were, personally sent word to Boufflers to surrender, but the Maréchal, even after he had received this order, delayed many days to obey it.

At last, in want of the commonest necessaries, and able to protract his defence no longer, he beat a parley, signed a capitulation on the 9th of December, obtaining all he asked, and retired from Lille. Prince Eugène, to whom he surrendered, treated him with much distinction and friendship, invited him to dinner several times,—overwhelmed him, in fact, with attention and civilities. The Prince was glad indeed to have brought to a successful issue such a difficult siege.

CHAPTER XV.

Equivocal position of the Duc de Bourgogne—His weak conduct—Concealment of a battle from the King—Return of the Duc de Bourgogne to Court—Incidents of his reception—Monseigneur—Reception of the Duc de Berry—Behaviour of the Duc de Bourgogne—Anecdotes of Gamaches—Return of Vendôme to Court—His star begins to wane—Contrast of Boufflers and Vendôme—Chamillart's project for retaking Lille—How it was defeated by Madame de Maintenon.

The position of Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne at the army continued to be equivocal. He was constantly in collision with M. de Vendôme. The latter, after the loss of Lille, wished to defend the Escaut, without any regard to its extent of forty miles. The Duc de Bourgogne, as far as he dared, took the part of Berwick, who maintained that the defence was impossible. The King, hearing of all these disputes, actually sent Chamillart to the army to compose them; and it was a curious sight to behold this penman, this financier, acting as arbiter between generals on the most delicate operations of war. Chamillart continued to admire Vendôme, and treated the Duc de Bourgogne with little respect both at the army, and, after his return, in conversation with the King. His report was given in presence of Madame de Maintenon, who listened without daring to say a word, and repeated everything to the Duchesse de Bourgogne. We may imagine what passed between them, and the anger of

the Princesse against the minister. For the present, however, nothing could be done. Berwick was soon afterwards almost disgraced. As soon as he was gone, M. de Vendôme wrote to the King, saying, that he was sure of preventing the enemy from passing the Escaut —that he answered for it on his head. With such a guarantee from a man in such favour at Court, who could doubt? Yet, shortly after Marlborough crossed the Escaut in four places and Vendôme actually wrote to the King, begging him to remember that he had always declared the defence of the Escaut to be impossible!

The cabal made a great noise to cover this monstrous audacity, and endeavoured to renew the attack against the Duc de Bourgogne. We shall see what success attended their efforts. The army was at Soissons, near Tournai, in a profound tranquillity, the opium of which had gained the Duc de Bourgogne, when news of the approach of the enemy was brought. M. de Vendôme advanced in that direction, and sent word to the Duc, that he thought he ought to advance on the morrow with all his army. The Duc was going to bed when he received the letter; and although it was too late to repulse the enemy, was much blamed for continuing to undress himself, and putting of action till the morrow.

To this fault he added another. He had eaten; it was very early; and it was no longer proper to march. It was necessary to wait fresh orders from M. de Vendôme. Tournai was near. The Duc de Bourgogne went there to have a game at tennis. This sudden

party of pleasure strongly scandalised the army, and raised all manner of unpleasant talk. Advantage was taken of the young Prince's imprudence to throw upon him the blame of what was caused by the negligence of M. de Vendôme.

A serious and disastrous action that took place during these operations was actually kept a secret from the King, until the Duc de la Tremoille, whose son was engaged there, let out the truth. Annoyed that the King said nothing to him on the way in which his son had distinguished himself, he took the opportunity whilst he was serving the King to talk of the passage of the Escaut, and said that his son's regiment had much suffered. "How, suffered?" cried the King; "nothing has happened." Whereupon the Duc related all to him. The King listened with the greatest attention, and questioned him, and admitted before everybody, that he knew nothing of all this. His surprise, and the surprise it occasioned may be imagined.

It happened that when the King left table, Chamillart unexpectedly came into his cabinet. He was soon asked about the action of the Escaut, and why it had not been reported. The minister, embarrassed, said that it was a thing of no consequence. The King continued to press him, mentioned details, and talked of the regiment of the Prince of Tarento. Chamillart then admitted that what happened at the passage was so disagreeable, and the combat so disagreeable, but so little important, that Madame de Maintenon, to whom he had reported all, had thought it best not to trouble the King upon the matter, and it had accord-

ingly been agreed not to trouble him. Upon this singular answer the King stopped short in his questions, and said not a word more.

The Escaut being forced, the citadel of Lille on the point of being taken, our army exhausted with fatigue was at last dispersed, to the scandal of everybody; for it was known that Ghent was about to be besieged. The Princes received orders to return to Court, but they insisted on the propriety of remaining with the army. M. de Vendôme, who began to fear the effect of his rashness and insolence, tried to obtain the permission to pass the winter with the army on the frontier. He was not listened to. The Princes received orders most positively to return to Court, and accordingly set out.

The Duchesse de Bourgogne was very anxious about the way in which the Duc was to be received, and eager to talk to him and explain how matters stood, before he saw the King or anybody else. I sent a message to him that he ought to contrive to arrive after midnight, in order to pass two or three hours with the Duchesse, and perhaps see Madame de Maintenon early in the morning. My message was not received; at any rate not followed. The Duc de Bourgogne arrived on the 11th of December, a little after seven o'clock in the evening, just as Monseigneur had gone to the play, whither the Duchesse had not gone, in order to wait for her husband. I know not why he alighted in the Cour des Princes, instead of the Great Court. I was put then in the apartments of the Comtesse de Roncy, from which I could see all that passed. I came down, and saw the Prince ascending the steps between the

Dues de Beauvilliers and De la Rocheguyon, who happened to be there. He looked quite satisfied, was gay, and laughing, and spoke right and left. I bowed to him. He did me the honour to embrace me, in a way that showed me he knew better what was going on than how to maintain his dignity. He then talked only to me, and whispered that he knew what I had said. A troop of courtiers met him. In their midst he passed the Great Hall of the Guards, and instead of going to Madame de Maintenon's by the private door, though the nearest way, went to the great public entrance. There was no one there but the King and Madame de Maintenon, with Pontchartrain; for I do not count the Duchesse de Bourgogne. Pontchartrain noted well what passed at the interview, and related it all to me that very evening.

As soon as in Madame de Maintenon's apartment was heard the rumour which usually precedes such an arrival, the King became sufficiently embarrassed to change countenance several times. The Duchesse de Bourgogne appeared somewhat tremulous, and fluttered about the room to hide her trouble, pretending not to know exactly by which door the Prince would arrive. Madame de Maintenon was thoughtful. Suddenly all the doors flew open: the young Prince advanced towards the King, who, master of himself, more than any one ever was, lost at once all embarrassment, took two or three steps towards his grandson, embraced him with some demonstration of tenderness, spoke of his voyage, and then pointing to the Princesse, said, with a smiling countenance: "Do you say

nothing to her?" The Prince turned a moment towards her, and answered respectfully, as if he dared not turn away from the King, and did not move. He then saluted Madame de Maintenon, who received him well. Talk of travel, beds, roads, and so forth, lasted, all standing, some half-quarter of an hour; then the King said it would not be fair to deprive him any longer of the pleasure of being alone with Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne, and that they would have time enough to see each other. The Prince made a bow to the King, another to Madame de Maintenon, passed before the few ladies of the palace who had taken courage to put their heads into the room, entered the neighbouring cabinet, where he embraced the Duchesse, saluted the ladies who were there, that is, kissed them, remained a few moments, and then went into his apartment, where he shut himself up with the Duchesse de Bourgogne.

Their *tête-à-tête* lasted two hours and more: just towards the end, Madame d'O. was let in; soon after the Maréchale d'Estrées entered, and soon after that the Duchesse de Bourgogne came out with them, and returned into the Great Cabinet of Madame de Maintenon. Monseigneur came there as usual, on returning from the comedy. Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne, troubled that the Duc did not hurry himself to come and salute his father, went to fetch him, and came back saying that he was putting on his powder; but observing that Monseigneur was little satisfied with this want of eagerness, sent again to hurry him. Just then the Maréchale d'Estrées, hair-

brained and light, and free to say just what came into her head, began to attack Monseigneur for waiting so tranquilly for his son, instead of going himself to embrace him. This random expression did not succeed. Monseigneur replied stiffly, that it was not for him to seek the Duc de Bourgogne; but the duty of the Duc de Bourgogne to seek him. He came at last. The reception was pretty good, but did not by any means equal that of the King. Almost immediately the King rang, and everybody went to the supper-room.

During the supper, M. le Duc de Berry arrived, and came to salute the King at table. To greet *him* all hearts opened. The King embraced him very tenderly. Monseigneur only looked at him tenderly, not daring to embrace his (youngest) son in presence of the King. All present courted him. He remained standing near the King all the rest of the supper, and there was no talk save of post-horses, of roads, and such like trifles. The King spoke sufficiently at table to Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne; but to the Duc de Berry, he assumed a very different air. Afterwards, there was a supper for the Duc de Berry in the apartments of the Duchesse de Bourgogne; but the conjugal impatience of the Duc de Bourgogne cut it rather too short.

I expressed to the Duc de Beauvilliers, with my accustomed freedom, that the Duc de Bourgogne seemed to me very gay on returning from so sad a campaign. He could not deny this, and made up his mind to give a hint on the subject. Everybody indeed blamed so misplaced a gaiety. Two or three days

after his arrival the Duc de Bourgogne passed three hours with the King in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon. I was afraid that his piety would withhold him from letting out on the subject of M. de Vendôme, but I heard that he spoke on that subject without restraint, impelled by the advice of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and also by the Duc de Beauvilliers, who set his conscience at ease. His account of the campaign, of affairs, of things, of advices, of proceedings, was complete. Another, perhaps, less virtuous, might have used weightier terms; but at any rate everything was said with a completeness beyond all hope, if we consider who spoke and who listened. The Duc concluded with an eager prayer to be given an army in the next campaign, and with the promise of the King to that effect. Soon after an explanation took place with Monseigneur at Meudon, Mademoiselle Choin being present. With the latter he spoke much more in private: she had taken his part with Monseigneur. The Duchesse de Bourgogne had gained her over. The connection of this girl with Madame de Maintenon was beginning to grow very close indeed.

Gamaches had been to the army with the Duc de Bourgogne, and being a free-tongued man had often spoken out very sharply on the puerilities in which he indulged in company with the Duc de Berry, influenced by his example. One day returning from mass, in company with the Duc on a critical day, when he would rather have seen him on horseback, he said aloud, "You will certainly win the kingdom of heaven; but as for the kingdom of the earth, Prince Eugène and

Marlborough know how to seek it better than you." What he said quite as publicly to the two Princes on their treatment of the King of England, was admirable. That Prince (known as the Chevalier de St. Georges) served incognito, with a modesty that the Princes took advantage of to treat him with the greatest indifference and contempt. Towards the end of the campaign, Gamaches, exasperated with their conduct, exclaimed to them in the presence of everybody: "Is this a wager? speak frankly; if so, you have won, there can be no doubt of that; but now, speak a little to the Chevalier de St. Georges, and treat him more politely." These sallies, however, were too public to produce any good effect. They were suffered, but not attended to.

The citadel of Lille capitulated as we have seen, with the consent of the King, who was obliged to acknowledge that the Maréchal de Boufflers had done all he could, and that further defence was impossible. Prince Eugène treated Boufflers with the greatest possible consideration. The enemy at this time made no secret of their intention to invest Ghent, which made the dispersal of our army the more shameful; but necessity commanded, for no more provisions were to be got.

M. de Vendôme arrived at Versailles on the morning of December 15th, and saluted the King as he left table. The King embraced him with a sort of enthusiasm that made his cabal triumph. He monopolised all conversation during the dinner, but only trifles were talked of. The King said he would talk to him next day at Madame de Maintenon's. This delay, which was new to him, did not seem of good augury.

He went to pay his respects to M. de Bourgogne, who received him well in spite of all that had passed. Then Vendôme went to wait on Monseigneur at the Princesse de Conti's: here he thought himself in his stronghold. He was received excellently, and the conversation turned on nothings. He wished to take advantage of this, and proposed a visit to Anet. His surprise and that of those present were great at the uncertain reply of Monseigneur, who caused it to be understood, and rather stiffly too, that he would not go. Vendôme appeared embarrassed, and abridged his visit. I met him at the end of the gallery of the new wing, as I was coming from M. de Beauvilliers, turning towards the steps in the middle of the gallery. He was alone, without torches or valets, with Alberoni, followed by a man I did not know. I saw him by the light of my torches; we saluted each other politely, though we had not much acquaintance one with the other. He seemed chagrined, and was going to M. du Maine, his council and principal support.

Next day he passed an hour with the King at Madame de Maintenon's. He remained eight or ten days at Versailles or at Meudon, and never went to the Duchesse de Bourgogne's. This was nothing new for him. The mixture of grandeur and irregularity which he had long affected, seemed to him to have freed him from the most indispensable duties. His Abbé Alberoni showed himself at the King's mass in the character of a courtier with unparalleled effrontery. At last they went to Anet. Even before he went he perceived some diminution in his position, since he

lowered himself so far as to invite people to come and see him,—he who in former years made it a favour to receive the most distinguished persons. He soon perceived the falling off in the number of his visitors. Some excused themselves from going; others promised to go and did not. Every one made a difficulty about a journey of fifteen leagues which the year before was considered as easy and as necessary as that of Marly. Vendôme remained at Anet until the first voyage to Marly, when he came; and he always came to Marly and Meudon, never to Versailles, until the change of which I shall soon have occasion to speak.

The Maréchal de Boufflers returned to court from his firm but unsuccessful defence of Lille, and was received in a triumphant manner, and overwhelmed with honours and rewards. This contrast with Vendôme was remarkable: the one raised by force of trickery, heaping up mountains like the giants, leaning on vice, lies, audacity, on a cabal inimical to the state and its heirs,* a factitious hero, made such by will in despite of truth;—the other, without cabal, with no support but virtue and modesty, was inundated with favours, and the applause of enemies was followed by the acclamations of the public, so that the nature of even courtiers changed, and they were happy in the recompenses showered upon him!

Some days after the return of the Duc de Bourgogne, Cheverny had an interview with him, on leaving

* Observe the curious identification of the State and the King:—*l'Etat et ses heritiers.* This illustrates the probably apocryphal saying—"*L'Etat c'est Moi.*"

which he told me what I cannot refrain from relating here, though it is necessarily with confusion that I write it. He said that, speaking freely with him on what had been circulated during the campaign, the Prince observed that he knew how and with what vivacity I had expressed myself, and that he was informed of the manner in which the Prince de Conti had given his opinion, and added that with the approval of two such men, that of others might be dispensed with. Cheverny, a very truthful man, came full of this to tell it to me at once. I was filled with confusion at being placed beside a man as superior to me in knowledge of war as he was in rank and birth; but I felt with gratitude how well M. de Beauvilliers had kept his word and spoken in my favour.

The last evening of this year (1708) was very remarkable, because there had not yet been an example of any such thing. The King having retired after supper to his cabinet with his family, as usual, Chamillart came without being sent for. He whispered in the King's ear that he had a long despatch from the Maréchal de Boufflers. Immediately the King said good-night to Monseigneur and the Princesses, who went out with every one else; and the King actually worked for an hour with his minister before going to bed, so excited was he by the great project for retaking Lille!

Since the fall of Lille, in fact, Chamillart, impressed with the importance of the place being in our possession, had laid out a plan by which we were to lay siege to it and re-capture it. One part of his plan

was, that the King should conduct the siege in person. Another was, that, as money was so difficult to obtain, the ladies of the Court should not accompany the King, as their presence caused a large increase of expense for carriages, servants, and so on. He confided his project to the King, under a strict promise that it should be kept secret from Madame de Maintenon. He feared, and with reason, that if she heard of it she would object to being separated from the King for such a long time as would be necessary for the siege. Chamillart was warned that if he acted thus, hiding his plan from Madame de Maintenon, to whom he owed everything, she would assuredly ruin him, but he paid no attention to the warning. He felt all the danger he ran, but he was courageous; he loved the State, and, if I may say so, he loved the King as a mistress. He followed his own counsels then, and made the King acquainted with his project.

The King was at once delighted with it. He entered into the details submitted to him by Chamillart with the liveliest interest, and promised to carry out all that was proposed. He sent for Boufflers, who had returned from Lille, and having, as I have said, recompensed him for his brave defence of that place with a peerage and other marks of favour, despatched him privately into Flanders to make preparations for the siege. The abandonment of Ghent by our troops, after a short and miserable defence, made him more than ever anxious to carry out this scheme.

But the King had been so unused to keep a secret from Madame de Maintenon, that he felt himself constrained in attempting to do so now. He confided to her, therefore, the admirable plan of Chamillart. She had the address to hide her surprise, and the strength to dissimulate perfectly her vexation; she praised the project; she appeared charmed with it; she entered into the details; she spoke of them to Chamillart; admired his zeal, his labour, his diligence, and, above all, his ability, in having conceived and rendered possible so fine and grand a project.

From that moment, however, she forgot nothing in order to ensure its failure. The first sight of it had made her tremble. To be separated from the King during a long siege; to abandon him to a minister to whom he would be grateful for all the success of that siege; a minister, too, who, although her creature, had dared to submit this project to the King without informing her; who, moreover, had recently offended her by marrying his son into a family she considered inimical to her, and by supporting M. de Vendôme against Monseigneur de Bourgogne! These were considerations that determined her to bring about the failure of Chamillart's project and the disgrace of Chamillart himself.

She employed her art so well, that after a time the project upon Lille did not appear so easy to the King as at first. Soon after, it seemed difficult; then too hazardous and ruinous; so that at last it was abandoned, and Boufflers had orders to cease his preparations and return to France! She succeeded thus in

an affair she considered the most important she had undertaken during all her life. Chamillart was much touched, but little surprised. As soon as he knew his secret had been confided to Madame de Maintenon he had feeble hope for it. Now he began to fear for himself.

CHAPTER XVI.

Tremendous cold in France—Winters of 1708-1709—Financiers and the famine—Interference of the Parliaments of Paris and Dijon—Dreadful oppression — Misery of the people — New taxes — Forced labour — General ruin—Increased misfortunes—Threatened regicide— Procession of St. Geneviève—Offerings of plate to the King—Discontent of the people—A bread riot, how appeased.

One of the reasons Madame de Maintenon had brought forward, which much assisted her in opposing the siege of Lille, was the excessive cold of this winter. The winter was, in fact, terrible; the memory of man could find no parallel to it. The frost came suddenly on Twelfth Night, and lasted nearly two months, beyond all recollection. In four days the Seine and all the other rivers were frozen, and, what had never been seen before, the sea froze all along the coasts, so as to bear carts, even heavily laden, upon it. Curious observers pretended that this cold surpassed what had ever been felt in Sweden and Denmark. The tribunals were closed a considerable time. The worst thing was, that it completely thawed for seven or eight days, and then froze again as rudely as before. This caused the complete destruction of all kinds of vegetation—even fruit-trees, and others of the most hardy kind, were destroyed. The violence of the cold was such, that the strongest elixirs and the most spirituous liquors broke their bottles in cupboards of rooms with fires in

them, and surrounded by chimneys, in several parts of the château of Versailles, as I myself
supping with the Duc de Villeroy, in his little bed-room, I saw bottles that had come from a well-heated kitchen, and that had been put on the chimney-piece of this bed-room (which was close to the kitchen), so frozen, that pieces of ice fell into our glasses as we poured out from them. The second frost ruined everything. There were no walnut-trees, no olive-trees, no apple-trees, no vines left,—none worth speaking of, at least. The other trees died in great numbers; the gardens perished, and all the grain in the earth. It is impossible to imagine the desolation of this general ruin. Everybody held tight his old grain. The price of bread increased in proportion to the despair for the next harvest. The most knowing re-sowed barley where there had been wheat, and were imitated by the majority. They were the most successful, and saved all; but the police bethought themselves of prohibiting this, and repented too late! Divers edicts were published respecting grain, researches were made, and granaries filled; commissioners were appointed to scour the provinces, and all these steps contributed to increase the general dearness and poverty, and that too at a time when, as was afterwards proved, there was enough corn in the country to feed all France for two years, without a fresh ear being reaped.

Many people believed that the finance gentlemen had clutched at this occasion to seize upon all the corn in the kingdom, by emissaries they sent about, in order

to sell it at whatever price they wished for the profit of the King, not forgetting their own. The fact that a large quantity of corn that the King had bought, and that had spoiled upon the Loire, was thrown into the water in consequence, did not shake this opinion, as the accident could not be hidden. It is certain that the price of corn was equal in all the markets of the realm; that at Paris, commissioners fixed the price by force, and often obliged the vendors to raise it in spite of themselves; that when people cried out, "How long will this scarcity last?" some commissioners in a market, close to my house, near St. Germain des Prés, replied openly, "As long as you please," moved by compassion and indignation, meaning thereby, as long as the people chose to submit to the regulation, according to which no corn entered Paris, except on an order of d'Argenson. D'Argenson was the lieutenant of police. The bakers were treated with the utmost rigour in order to keep up the price of bread all over France. In the provinces, officers called intendants did what d'Argenson did at Paris. On all the markets, the corn that was not sold at the hour fixed for closing was forcibly carried off; those who, from pity, sold their corn lower than the fixed rate, were punished with cruelty!

Maréchal, the King's surgeon, had the courage and the probity to tell all these things to the King, and to state the sinister opinions it gave rise to among all classes, even the most enlightened. The King appeared touched, was not offended with Maréchal, but did nothing.

In several places large stores of corn were collected by the government authorities, but with the greatest possible secrecy. Private people were expressly forbidden to do this, and informers were encouraged to betray them. A poor fellow, having bethought himself of informing against one of the stores alluded to above, was severely punished for his pains. The parliament assembled to debate upon these disorders. It came to the resolution of submitting various proposals to the King, which it deemed likely to improve the condition of the country, and offered to send its Conseillers to examine into the conduct of the monopolists. As soon as the King heard of this, he flew into a strange passion, and his first intention was to send a harsh message to the Parliament to attend to law trials, and not to mix with matters that did not concern it. The chancellor did not dare to represent to the King that what the Parliament wished to do belonged to its province, but calmed him by representing the respect and affection with which the Parliament regarded him, and that he was master either to accept or refuse its offers. No reprimand was given, therefore, to the Parliament, but it was informed that the King prohibited it from meddling with the corn question. However accustomed the Parliament, as well as all the other public bodies, might be to humiliations, it was exceedingly vexed by this treatment, and obeyed with the greatest grief. The public was, nevertheless, much affected by the conduct of the Parliament, and felt that if the Finance Ministry had been innocent in the matter the King would have been pleased with what had taken

place, which was in no respect an attack on the absolute and unbounded authority, of which he was so vilely jealous.

In the country a somewhat similar incident occurred. The Parliament of Burgundy, seeing the province in the direst necessity, wrote to the Intendant, who did not bestir himself the least in the world. In this pressing danger of a murderous famine, the members assembled to debate upon the course to adopt. Nothing was said or done more than was necessary, and all with infinite discretion, yet the King was no sooner informed of it than he grew extremely irritated. He sent a severe reprimand to this Parliament; prohibited it from meddling again in the matter; and ordered the president who had conducted the assembly to come at once to Court, to explain his conduct. He came, and but for the intervention of M. le Duc would have been deprived of his post, irreproachable as his conduct had been. He received a sharp scolding from the King, and was then allowed to depart. At the end of a few weeks he returned to Dijon, where it had been resolved to receive him in triumph; but like a wise and experienced man, he shunned these attentions, arranging so that he arrived at Dijon at four o'clock in the morning. The other Parliaments, with these examples before them, were afraid to act, and allowed the Intendants and their emissaries to have it all their own way. It was at this time that those commissioners were appointed, to whom I have already alluded, who acted under the authority of the Intendants, and without dependence of any kind upon the Parliaments.

True, a court of appeal against their decisions was established, but it was a mere mockery. The members who composed it did not set out to fulfil their duties until three months after having been appointed. Then, matters had been so arranged, that they received no appeals and found no cases to judge. All this dark work remained, therefore, in the hands of d'Argenson and the Intendants, and it continued to be done with the same harshness as ever.

Without passing a more definite judgment on those who invented and profited by this scheme, it may be said that there has scarcely been a century which has produced one more mysterious, more daring, better arranged, and resulting in an oppression so enduring, so sure, so cruel. The sums it produced were innumerable; and innumerable were the people who died literally of hunger, and those who perished afterwards of the maladies caused by the extremity of misery; innumerable also were the families who were ruined, whose ruin brought down a torrent of other ills.

Despite all this, payments, hitherto most strictly made, began to cease. Those of the customs, those of the divers loans, the dividends upon the Hôtel de Ville—in all times so sacred—all were suspended; these last alone continued, but with delays, then with retrenchments, which desolated nearly all the families of Paris and many others. At the same time the taxes—increased, multiplied, and exacted with the most extreme rigour—completed the devastation of France. Everything rose incredibly in price, while nothing was left to buy with, even at the cheapest rate; and al-

though the majority of the cattle had perished for want of food, and by the misery of those who kept them, a new monopoly was established upon horned beasts. A great number of people who, in preceding years, used to relieve the poor, found themselves so reduced as to be able to subsist only with great difficulty, and many of them received alms in secret. It is impossible to say how many others laid siege to the hospitals, until then the shame and punishment of the poor; how many ruined hospitals re-vomited forth their inmates to the public charge, that is to say, sent them away to die actually of hunger; and how many decent families shut themselves up in garrets to die of want.

It is impossible to say, moreover, how all this misery warmed up zeal and charity, or how immense were the alms distributed. But want increasing each instant, an indiscreet and tyrannical charity imagined new taxes for the benefit of the poor. They were imposed, and, added to so many others, vexed numbers of people, who were annoyed at being compelled to pay, who would have preferred giving voluntarily. Thus, these new taxes, instead of helping the poor, really took away assistance from them and left them worse off than before. The strangest thing of all is, that these taxes in favour of the poor were perpetuated and appropriated by the King, and are received by the financiers on his account to this day as a branch of the revenue, the name of them not having even been changed. The same thing has happened with respect to the annual tax for keeping up the highways and

thoroughfares of the kingdom. The majority of the bridges were broken, and the high roads had become impracticable. Trade, which suffered by this, awakened attention. The Intendant of Champagne determined to mend the roads by parties of men, whom he compelled to work for nothing, not even giving them bread. He was imitated everywhere, and was made Counsellor of State. The people died of hunger and misery at this work, while those who overlooked them made fortunes. In the end the thing was found to be impracticable, and was abandoned, and so were the roads. But the impost for making them and keeping them up did not in the least stop during this experiment or since, nor has it ceased to be appropriated as a branch of the King's revenue.

But to return to the year 1709. People never ceased wondering what had become of all the money of the realm. Nobody could any longer pay, because nobody was paid: the country-people, overwhelmed with exactions and with valueless property, had become insolvent: trade no longer yielded anything—good faith and confidence were at an end. Thus the King had no resources, except in terror and in his unlimited power, which, boundless as it was, failed also for want of having something to take and to exercise itself upon. There was no more circulation, no means of re-establishing it. All was perishing step by step; the realm was entirely exhausted; the troops even, were not paid, although no one could imagine what was done with the millions that came into the King's coffers. The unfed soldiers disheartened too at being

so badly commanded were always unsuccessful; there was no capacity in generals or ministers; no appointment except by whim or intrigue; nothing was punished, nothing examined, nothing weighed: there was equal impotence to sustain the war and bring about peace: all suffered, yet none dared to put the hand to this arch, tottering as it was and ready to fall.

This was the frightful state to which we were reduced, when envoys were sent into Holland to try and bring about peace. The picture is exact, faithful, and not overcharged. It was necessary to present it as it was, in order to explain the extremity to which we were reduced, the enormity of the concessions which the King made to obtain peace, and the visible miracle of Him who sets bounds to the seas, by which France was allowed to escape from the hands of Europe, resolved and ready to destroy her.

Meanwhile the money was re-coined; and its increase to a third more than its intrinsic value, brought some profit to the King, but ruin to private people, and a disorder to trade which completed its annihilation.

Samuel Bernard, the banker, overthrew all Lyons by his prodigious bankruptcy, which caused the most terrible results. Desmarets assisted him as much as possible. The discredit into which paper money had fallen, was the cause of his failure. He had issued notes to the amount of twenty millions, and owed almost as much at Lyons. Fourteen millions were given to him in assignations, in order to draw him out of his difficulties. It is pretended that he found

means to gain much by his bankruptcy, but this seems doubtful.

The winter at length passed away. In the spring so many disorders took place in the market of Paris, that more guards than usual were kept in the city. At Saint Roch there was a disturbance, on account of a poor fellow who had fallen, and been trampled under foot; and the crowd, which was very large, was very insolent to d'Argenson, Lieutenant of Police, who had hastened there. M. de la Rochefoucauld, who had retired from the court to Chenil, on account of his loss of sight, received an atrocious letter against the King, in which it was plainly intimated that there were still Ravaillacs left in the world; and to this madness was added an eulogy of Brutus.* M. de la Rochefoucauld at once went in all haste to the King with this letter. His sudden appearance showed that something important had occurred, and the object of his visit, of course, soon became known. He was very ill-received for coming so publicly on such an errand. The Ducs de Beauvilliers and De Bouillon it seems had received similar letters, but had given them to the King privately. The King for some days was much troubled, but after due reflection, he came to the conclusion, that people who menace and warn have less intention of committing a crime than of causing alarm.

What annoyed the King more was, the inundation of

* The mind recoils with horror from the wretch to whom such an idea could have presented itself amidst the blessings which the absolute authority of Louis XIV. was showering upon the country.

placards, the most daring and the most unmeasured, against his person, his conduct, and his government—placards, which for a long time were found pasted upon the gates of Paris, the churches, the public places, above all upon the statues; which, during the night, were insulted in various fashions, the marks being seen the next morning, and the inscriptions erased. There were also, multitudes of verses and songs, in which nothing was spared.

We were in this state until the 16th of May. The procession of St. Geneviève took place. This procession never takes place except in times of the direst necessity; and then, only in virtue of orders from the King, the parliament, or the Archbishop of Paris. On the one hand, it was hoped that it would bring succour to the country; on the other, that it would amuse the people.

It was shortly after this, when the news of the arrogant demands of the allies, and the vain attempts of the King to obtain an honourable peace became known, that the Duchesse de Grammont conceived the idea of offering her plate to the King, to replenish his impoverished exchequer, and to afford him means to carry on the war. She hoped that her example would be followed by all the Court, and that she alone would have the merit and the profit of suggesting the idea. Unfortunately for this hope, the Duc, her husband, spoke of the project to Maréchal Boufflers, who thought it so good, that he noised it abroad, and made such a stir, exhorting everybody to adopt it, that he passed for the inventor, and no mention

was made of the Duc or the old Duchesse de Grammont, the latter of whom was much enraged at this.

The project made a great hubbub at the Court. Nobody dared to refuse to offer his plate, yet each offered it with much regret. Some had been keeping it as a last resource, which they were very sorry to deprive themselves of; others feared the dirtiness of copper and earthenware; others again were annoyed at being obliged to imitate an ungrateful fashion, all the merit of which would go to the inventor. It was in vain that Pontchartrain objected to the project, as one from which only trifling benefit could be derived, and which would do great injury to France by acting as a proclamation of its embarrassed state to all the world, at home and abroad. The King would not listen to his reasonings, but declared himself willing to receive all the plate that was sent to him as a free-will offering. He announced this; and two means were indicated at the same time, which all good citizens might follow. One was, to send their plate to the King's goldsmith; the other, to send it to the Mint. Those who made an unconditional gift of their plate, sent it to the former, who kept a register of the names and of the number of marks he received. The King regularly looked over this list, at least at first, and promised in general terms to restore to everybody the weight of metal they gave when his affairs permitted—a promise nobody believed in or hoped to see executed. Those who wished to be paid for their plate sent it to the Mint. It was weighed on arrival; the names were written, the marks and the date; payment was made according as money could be

found. Many people were not sorry thus to sell their plate without shame. But the loss and the damage were inestimable in admirable ornaments of all kinds, with which much of the plate of the rich was embellished.

When an account came to be drawn up, it was found that not a hundred people were upon the list of Launay, the goldsmith; and the total product of the gifts did not amount to three millions. I confess that I was very late in sending my plate. When I found that I was almost the only one of my rank using silver, I sent plate to the value of a thousand pistoles to the Mint, and locked up the rest. All the great people turned to earthenware, exhausted the shops where it was sold, and set the trade in it on fire, while common folks continued to use their silver. Even the King thought of using earthenware, having sent his gold vessels to the Mint, but afterwards decided upon plated metal and silver; the Princes and Princesses of the blood used crockery.

Ere three months were over his head the King felt all the shame and the weakness of having consented to this surrendering of plate, and avowed that he repented of it. The inundations of the Loire, which happened at the same time, and caused the utmost disorder, did not restore the Court or the public to good humour. The losses they caused, and the damage they did, were very considerable, and ruined many private people, and desolated home trade.

Summer came. The dearness of all things, and of bread in particular, continued to cause frequent commotions all over the realm. Although, as I have said,

the guards of Paris were much increased, above all in the markets and the suspected places, they were unable to hinder disturbances from breaking out. In many of these D'Argenson nearly lost his life.

Monseigneur, arriving and returning from the Opera, was assailed by the populace and by women in great numbers, crying, "Bread! Bread!" so that he was afraid, even in the midst of his guards, who did not dare to disperse the crowd for fear of worse happening. He got away by throwing money to the people, and promising wonders; but as the wonders did not follow, he no longer dared to go to Paris.

The King himself from his windows heard the people of Versailles crying aloud in the street. The discourses they held were daring and continual in the streets and public places; they uttered complaints, sharp, and but little measured, against the government, and even against the King's person; and even exhorted each other no longer to be so enduring, saying that nothing worse could happen to them than what they suffered, dying as they were of starvation.

To amuse the people, the idle and the poor were employed to level a rather large hillock which remained upon the Boulevard, between the Portes St. Denis and St. Martin; and for all salary, bad bread in small quantities was distributed to these workers. It happened that on Tuesday morning, the 20th of August, there was no bread for a large number of these people. A woman amongst others cried out at this, which excited the rest to do likewise. The archers, appointed to watch over these labourers, threatened the woman;

she only cried the louder; thereupon the archers seized her, and indiscreetly put her in an adjoining pillory. In a moment all her companions ran to her aid, pulled down the pillory, and scoured the streets, pillaging the bakers and pastrycooks. One by one the shops closed. The disorder increased and spread through the neighbouring streets; no harm was done anybody, but the cry was "Bread! Bread!" and bread was seized everywhere.

It so fell out that Maréchal Boufflers, who little thought what was happening, was in the neighbourhood, calling upon his notary. Surprised at the fright he saw everywhere, and learning the cause, he wished of himself to appease it. Accompanied by the Duc de Grammont, he directed himself towards the scene of the disturbance, although advised not to do so. When he arrived at the top of the Rue St. Denis, the crowd and the tumult made him judge that it would be best to alight from his coach. He advanced, therefore, on foot with the Duc de Grammont among the furious and infinite crowd of people, of whom he asked the cause of this uproar, promised them bread, spoke his best with gentleness but firmness, and remonstrated with them. He was listened to. Cries, several times repeated, of "Vive M. le Maréchal de Boufflers!" burst from the crowd. M. de Boufflers walked thus with M. de Grammont all along the Rue aux Ours and the neighbouring streets,—into the very centre of the sedition, in fact. The people begged him to represent their misery to the King, and to obtain for them some food. He promised this, and upon his word being given all

were appeased and all dispersed with thanks and fresh acclamations of "Vive M. le Maréchal de Boufflers!" He did a real service that day. D'Argenson had marched to the spot with troops; and had it not been for the Maréchal, blood would have been spilt, and things might have gone very far.

The Maréchal had scarcely reached his own house in the Place Royale than he was informed that the sedition had broken out with even greater force in the Faubourg St. Antoine. He ran there immediately, with the Duc de Grammont, and appeased it as he had appeased the other. He returned to his own home to eat a mouthful or two, and then set out for Versailles. Scarcely had he left the Place Royale than the people in the streets and the shopkeepers cried to him to have pity on them, and to get them some bread, always with "Vive M. le Maréchal de Boufflers!" He was conducted thus as far as the quay of the Louvre.

On arriving at Versailles he went straight to the King, told him what had occurred, and was much thanked. He was even offered by the King the command of Paris,—troops, citizens, police and all; but this he declined, Paris, as he said, having already a governor and proper officers to conduct its affairs. He afterwards, however, willingly lent his aid to them in office, and the modesty with which he acted brought him new glory.

Immediately after the supply of bread was carefully looked to. Paris was filled with patrols, perhaps with too many, but they succeeded so well that no fresh disturbances took place.

CHAPTER XVII.

M. de Vendôme out of favour—Death and character of the Prince de Conti — Fall of Vendôme—Puységur's interview with the King—Madame de Bourgogne against Vendôme—Her decided conduct—Vendôme excluded from Marly—He clings to Meudon—From which he is also expelled—His final disgrace and abandonment—Triumph of Madame de Maintenon.

After his return from the campaign, M. de Vendôme continued to be paid like a general serving in winter, and to enjoy many other advantages. From all this, people inferred that he would serve during the following campaign; nobody dared to doubt as much, and the cabal derived new strength therefrom. But their little triumph was not of long continuance. M. de Vendôme came to Versailles for the ceremony of the Order on Candlemas-day. He then learned that he was not to serve, and that he was no longer to receive general's pay. The blow was violent, and he felt it to its fullest extent; but, with a prudence that equalled his former imprudence, he swallowed the pill without making a face, because he feared other more bitter ones, which he felt he had deserved. This it was that, for the first time in his life, made him moderate. He did not affect to conceal what had taken place, but did not say whether it was in consequence of any request of his, or whether he was glad or sorry,—giving it out as an indifferent

piece of news; and changed nothing but his language, the audacity of which he diminished as no longer suited to the times. He sold his equipages.

M. le Prince de Conti died February 22, aged not quite forty-five. His face had been charming; even the defects of his body and mind had infinite graces. His shoulders were too high; his head was a little on one side; his laugh would have seemed a bray in any one else; his mind was strangely absent. He was gallant with the women, in love with many, well treated by several; he was even coquettish with men. He endeavoured to please the cobbler, the lacquey, the porter, as well as the Minister of State, the Grand Seigneur, the General,—all so naturally, that success was certain. He was consequently the constant delight of every one, of the Court, the armies; the divinity of the people, the idol of the soldiers, the hero of the officers, the hope of whatever was most distinguished, the love of the Parliament, the friend of the learned, and often the admiration of the historian, of jurisconsults, of astronomers, and mathematicians the most profound. He was especially learned in genealogies, and knew their chimeras and their realities. With him the useful and the polite, the agreeable and the deep, all was distinct and in its place. He had friends, knew how to choose them, cultivate them, visit them, live with them, put himself on their level without haughtiness or baseness. But this man, so amiable, so charming, so delicious, loved nothing. He had and desired friends, as other people have and desire articles of furniture. Although with much self-respect, he was a humble courtier, and

showed too much how greatly he was in want of support and assistance from all sides; he was avaricious, greedy of fortune, ardent, and unjust. The King could not bear him, and was grieved with the respect he was obliged to show him, and which he was careful never to trespass over by a single jot. Certain intercepted letters had excited a hatred against him in Madame de Maintenon, and an indignation in the King which nothing could efface. The riches, the talents, the agreeable qualities, the great reputation which this Prince had acquired, the general love of all, became crimes in him. The contrast with M. du Maine excited daily irritation and jealousy. The very purity of his blood was a reproach to him. Even his friends were odious, and felt that this was so. At last, however, various causes made him to be chosen, in the midst of a very marked disgrace, to command the army in Flanders. He was delighted, and gave himself up to the most agreeable hopes. But it was no longer time: he had sought to drown his sorrow at wearing out his life unoccupied in wine and other pleasures, for which his age and his already enfeebled body were no longer suited. His health gave way. He felt it soon. The tardy return to favour which he had enjoyed made him regret life more. He perished slowly, regretting to have been brought to death's door by disgrace, and the impossibility of being restored by the unexpected opening of a brilliant career.

The Prince, against the custom of those of his rank, had been very well educated. He was full of instruction. The disorders of his life had clouded his knowledge

but not extinguished it, and he often read to brush up his learning. He chose M. de la Tour to prepare him, and help him to die well. He was so attached to life that all his courage was required. For three months crowds of visitors filled his palace; and the people even collected in the place before it. The churches echoed with prayers for his life. The members of his family often went to pay for masses for him, and found that others had already done so. All questions were about his health. People stopped each other in the street to inquire; passers by were called to by shopmen, anxious to know whether the Prince de Conti was to live or to die. Amidst all this, Monseigneur never visited him; and, to the indignation of all Paris, passed along the quay near the Louvre going to the Opera, whilst the sacraments were being carried to the Prince on the other side. He was compelled by public opinion to make a short visit after this. The Prince died at last in his arm-chair, surrounded by a few worthy people. Regrets were universal; but perhaps he gained by his disgrace. His heart was firmer than his head. He might have been timid at the head of an army or in the Council of the King if he had entered it. The King was much relieved by his death; Madame de Maintenon also; M. le Duc much more; for M. du Maine it was a deliverance, and for M. de Vendôme a consolation. Monseigneur learned it at Meudon, as he was going out to hunt, and showed no feeling of any kind.

The death of M. le Prince de Conti seemed to the Duc de Vendôme a considerable advantage, because he was thus delivered from a rival most embarrassing by

the superiority of his birth, just when he was about to be placed in a high military position. I have already mentioned Vendôme's exclusion from command. The fall of this Prince of the Proud had then begun: we have now reached the second step, between which and the third there was a space of between two and three months; but as the third had no connection with any other event, I will relate it at once.

Whatever reasons existed to induce the King to take from M. de Vendôme the command of his armies, I know not if all the art and credit of Madame de Maintenon would not have been employed in vain, together with the intrigues of M. du Maine, without an adventure, which I must at once explain, to set before the reader's eyes the issue of the terrible struggle, pushed to such extremes, between Vendôme, seconded by his formidable cabal, and the necessary heir of the Crown, supported by his wife, the favourite of the King, and Madame de Maintenon, which last, to speak clearly, as all the Court saw, for thirty years governed him completely.

When M. de Vendôme returned from Flanders, he had a short interview with the King, in which he made many bitter complaints against Puységur, one of his lieutenant-generals, whose sole offence was that he was much attached to M. de Bourgogne. Puységur was a great favourite with the King, and often, on account of the business of the infantry regiment, of which the King thought himself the private colonel, had private interviews with him, and was held in high estimation for his capacity and virtue. He in his turn

came back from Flanders, and had a private audience of the King. The complaints that had been made against him by M. de Vendôme were repeated to him by the King, who, however, did not mention from whom they came. Puységur defended himself so well, that the King in his surprise mentioned this latter fact. At the name of Vendôme, Puységur lost all patience. He described to the King all the faults, the impertinences, the obstinacy, the insolence of M. de Vendôme, with a precision and clearness which made his listener very attentive and very fruitful in questions. Puységur, seeing that he might go on, gave himself rein, unmasked M. de Vendôme from top to toe, described his ordinary life at the army, the incapacity of his body, the incapacity of his judgment, the prejudices of his mind, the absurdity and crudity of his maxims, his utter ignorance of the art of war, and showed to demonstration, that it was only by a profusion of miracles France had not been ruined by him—lost a hundred times over.

The conversation lasted more than two hours. The King, long since convinced of the capacity, fidelity, and truthfulness of Puységur, at last opened his eyes to the truth respecting this Vendôme, hidden with so much art until then, and regarded as a hero and the tutelary genius of France. He was vexed and ashamed of his credulity, and from the date of this conversation Vendôme fell at once from his favour.

Puységur, naturally humble, gentle, and modest, but truthful, and on this occasion piqued, went out into the gallery after his conversation, and made a general

report of it to all, virtuously braving Vendôme and all his cabal. This cabal trembled with rage; Vendôme still more so. They answered by miserable reasonings, which nobody cared for. This was what led to the suppression of his pay, and his retirement to Anet, where he affected a philosophical indifference.

Crest-fallen as he was, he continued to sustain at Meudon and Marly the grand manners he had usurped at the time of his prosperity. After having got over the first embarrassment, he put on again his haughty air, and ruled the roast. To see him at Meudon you would have said he was certainly the master of the saloon, and by his free and easy manner to Monseigneur and, when he dared, to the King, he would have been thought the principal person there. Monseigneur de Bourgogne supported this—his piety made him do so—but Madame de Bourgogne was grievously offended, and watched her opportunity to get rid of M. de Vendôme altogether.

It came, the first journey the King made to Marly after Easter. *Brelan* was then the fashion. Monseigneur, playing at it one day with Madame de Bourgogne and others, and being in want of a fifth player, sent for M. de Vendôme from the other end of the saloon, to come and join the party. That instant Madame de Bourgogne said modestly, but very intelligibly, to Monseigneur, that the presence of M. de Vendôme at Marly was sufficiently painful to her, without having him at play with her, and that she begged he might be dispensed with. Monseigneur, who had sent for Vendôme without the slightest reflection, looked round the room,

and sent for somebody else. When Vendôme arrived, his place was taken, and he had to suffer this annoyance before all the company. It may be imagined to what an extent this superb gentleman was stung by the affront. He served no longer; he commanded no longer; he was no longer the adored idol; he found himself in the paternal mansion of the Prince he had so cruelly offended, and the outraged wife of that Prince was more than a match for him. He turned upon his heel, absented himself from the room as soon as he could, and retired to his own chamber, there to storm at his leisure.

Other and more cruel annoyances were yet in store for him however. Madame de Bourgogne reflected on what had just taken place. The facility with which she had succeeded in one respect encouraged her, but she was a little troubled to know how the King would take what she had done, and accordingly, whilst playing, she resolved to push matters still further, both to ruin her guest utterly and to get out of her embarrassment; for, despite her extreme familiarity, she was easily embarrassed, being gentle and timid. The brelan over, she ran to Madame de Maintenon; told her what had just occurred; said that the presence of M. de Vendôme at Marly was a continual insult to her; and begged her to solicit the King to forbid M. de Vendôme to come there. Madame de Maintenon, only too glad to have an opportunity of revenging herself upon an enemy who had set her at defiance, and against whom all her batteries had at one time failed, consented to this request. She spoke out to the King, who,

completely weary of M. de Vendôme, and troubled to have under his eyes a man whom he could not doubt was discontented, at once granted what was asked. Before going to bed he charged one of his valets to tell M. de Vendôme the next morning, that henceforth he was to absent himself from Marly, his presence there being disagreeable to Madame de Bourgogne.

It may be imagined into what an excess of despair M. de Vendôme fell, at a message so unexpected, and which sapped the foundations of all his hopes. He kept silent, however, for fear of making matters worse, did not venture attempting to speak to the King, and hastily retired to Clichy to hide his rage and shame. The news of his banishment from Marly soon spread abroad, and made so much stir, that to show it was not worth attention, he returned two days before the end of the visit, and stopped until the end in a continual shame and embarrassment. He set out for Anet at the same time that the King set out for Versailles, and has never since put his foot in Marly.

But another bitter draught was to be mixed for him. Banished from Marly, he had yet the privilege of going to Meudon. He did not fail to avail himself of this every time Monseigneur was there, and stopped as long as he stopped, although in the times of his splendour he had never stayed more than one or two days. It was seldom that Monseigneur visited Meudon without Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne going to see him. And yet M. de Vendôme never failed audaciously to present himself before her, as if to make her feel that at all events in Monseigneur's house he was a match

for her. Guided by former experience, the Princesse gently suffered this in silence, and watched her opportunity. It soon came.

Two months afterwards it happened that, while Monseigneur was at Meudon, the King, Madame de Maintenon, and Madame de Bourgogne, came to dine with him. Madame de Maintenon wished to talk with Mademoiselle Choin without sending for her to Versailles, and the King, as may be believed, was in the secret. I mention this to account for the King's visit. M. de Vendôme, who was at Meudon as usual, was stupid enough to present himself at the coach door as the King and his companions descended. Madame de Bourgogne was much offended, constrained herself less than usual, and turned away her head with affectation, after a sort of sham salute. He felt the sting, but had the folly to approach her again after dinner, while she was playing. He experienced the same treatment, but this time in a still more marked manner. Stung to the quick and out of countenance, he went up to his chamber, and did not descend until very late. During this time Madame de Bourgogne spoke to Monseigneur of the conduct of M. de Vendôme, and the same evening she addressed herself to Madame de Maintenon, and openly complained to the King. She represented to him how hard it was to her to be treated by Monseigneur with less respect than by the King: for while the latter had banished M. de Vendôme from Marly, the former continued to grant him an asylum at Meudon.

M. de Vendôme on his side complained bitterly to Monseigneur of the strange persecution that he suffered

everywhere from Madame de Bourgogne; but Monseigneur replied to him so coldly that he withdrew with tears in his eyes, determined, however, not to give up until he had obtained some sort of satisfaction. He set his friends to work to speak to Monseigneur; all they could draw from him was, that M. de Vendôme must avoid Madame de Bourgogne whenever she came to Meudon, and that it was the smallest respect he owed her until she was reconciled to him. A reply so dry and so precise was cruelly felt; but M. de Vendôme was not at the end of the chastisement he had more than merited. The next day put an end to all discussion upon the matter.

He was card-playing after dinner in a private cabinet, when D'Antin arrived from Versailles. He approached the players, and asked what was the position of the game, with an eagerness which made M. de Vendôme inquire the reason. D'Antin said he had to render an account to him of the matter he had entrusted him with.

"I!" exclaimed Vendôme, with surprise, "I have entrusted you with nothing."

"Pardon me," replied D'Antin; "you do not recollect, then, that I have an answer to make to you?"

From this perseverance M. de Vendôme comprehended that something was amiss, quitted his game, and went into an obscure wardrobe with D'Antin, who told him that he had been ordered by the King to beg Monseigneur not to invite M. de Vendôme to Meudon any more; that his presence there was as unpleasant to Madame de Bourgogne as it had been at Marly. Upon

this, Vendôme, transported with fury, vomited forth all that his rage inspired him with. He spoke to Monseigneur in the evening, but was listened to as coldly as before. Vendôme passed the rest of his visit in a rage and embarrassment easy to conceive, and on the day Monseigneur returned to Versailles he hurried straight to Anet.

But he was unable to remain quiet anywhere; so went off with his dogs, under pretence of going a hunting, to pass a month in his estate of La Ferté-Aleps, where he had no proper lodging and no society, and gave there free vent to his rage. Thence he returned again to Anet, where he remained abandoned by every one. Into this solitude, into this startling and public seclusion, incapable of sustaining a fall so complete, after a long habit of attaining everything, and doing everything he pleased, of being the idol of the world, of the Court, of the armies, of making his very vices adored, and his greatest faults admired, his defects commended,—so that he dared to conceive the prodigious design of ruining and destroying the necessary heir of the Crown, though he had never received anything but evidences of tenderness from him, and triumphed over him for eight months with the most scandalous success,—it was, I say, thus that this Colossus was overthrown by the breath of a prudent and courageous princess, who earned by this act merited applause. All who were concerned with her, were charmed to see of what she was capable; and all who were opposed to her and her husband trembled. The cabal, so formidable, so lofty, so accredited, so

closely united to overthrow them, and reign, after the King, under Monseigneur in their place—these chiefs, male and female, so enterprising and audacious, fell now into mortal discouragement and fear. It was a pleasure to see them work their way back with art and extreme humility, and turn round those of the opposite party who remained influential, and whom they had hitherto despised ; and especially, to see with what embarrassment, what fear, what terror, they began to crawl before the young Princesse, and wretchedly court the Duc de Bourgogne and his friends, and bend to them in the most extraordinary manner.

As for M. de Vendôme, without any resource, save what he found in his vices and his valets, he did not refrain from bragging among them of the friendship of Monseigneur for him, of which he said he was well assured. Violence had been done to Monseigneur's feelings. He was reduced to this misery of hoping that his words would be spread about by these valets, and would procure him some consideration from those who thought of the future. But the present was insupportable to him. To escape from it, he thought of serving in Spain, and wrote to Madame des Ursins asking employment. The King was annoyed at this step, and flatly refused to let him go to Spain. His intrigue, therefore, came to an end at once.

Nobody gained more by the fall of M. de Vendôme than Madame de Maintenon. Besides the joy she felt in overthrowing a man who, through M. du Maine, owed everything to her, and yet dared to resist her so

long and successfully; she felt also, that her credit became still more the terror of the Court; for no one doubted that what had occurred was a great example of her power. We shall presently see how she furnished another, which startled no less.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Death of Père de la Chaise—His infirmities in old age—Partiality of the King—Character of Père de la Chaise—The Jesuits—Choice of a new Confessor—Fagon's opinion—Destruction of Port Royal—Jansenists and Molinists—Pascal—Violent oppression of the inhabitants of Port Royal.

It is time now to retrace my steps to the point from which I have been led away in relating all the incidents which arose out of the terrible winter and the scarcity it caused.

The Court at that time beheld the renewal of a ministry, which from the time it had lasted was worn down to its very roots, and which was on that account only the more agreeable to the King. On the 20th of January, the Père de la Chaise, the confessor of the King, died at a very advanced age. He was of good family, and his father would have been rich had he not had a dozen children. Père de la Chaise succeeded in 1675 to Père Ferrier as confessor of the King, and occupied that post thirty-two years. The festival of Easter often caused him politic absences during the attachment of the King for Madame de Montespan. On one occasion he sent in his place the Père Deschamps, who bravely refused absolution. The Père de la Chaise was of mediocre mind but of good character, just, upright, sensible, prudent, gentle, and moderate,

an enemy of informers, and of violence of every kind. He kept clear of many scandalous transactions, befriended the Archbishop of Cambrai as much as he could, refused to push the Port Royal des Champs to its destruction, and always had on his table a copy of the New Testament of Père Quesnel, saying that he liked what was good wherever he found it. When near his eightieth year, with his head and his health still good, he wished to retire, but the King would not hear of it. Soon after, his faculties became worn out, and feeling this, he repeated his wish. The Jesuits, who perceived his failing more than he did himself, and felt the diminution of his credit, exhorted him to make way for another who should have the grace and zeal of novelty. For his part he sincerely desired repose, and he pressed the King to allow him to take it, but all in vain. He was obliged to bear his burthen to the very end. Even the infirmities and the decrepitude that afflicted could not deliver him. Decaying legs, memory extinguished, judgment collapsed, all his faculties confused, strange inconveniences for a confessor—nothing could disgust the King, and he persisted in having this corpse brought to him and carrying on customary business with it. At last, two days after a return from Versailles, he grew much weaker, received the sacrament, wrote with his own hand a long letter to the King, received a very rapid and hurried one in reply, and soon after died at five o'clock in the morning very peaceably. His confessor asked him two things, whether he had acted according to his conscience, and whether he had thought of the interests and honour of the

company of Jesuits; and to both these questions he answered satisfactorily.

The news was brought to the King as he came out of his cabinet. He received it like a Prince accustomed to losses, praised the Père de la Chaise for his goodness, and then said smilingly, before all the courtiers, and quite aloud, to the two fathers who had come to announce the death; "He was so good that I sometimes reproached him for it, and he used to reply to me: 'It is not I who am good; it is you who are hard.'"

Truly the fathers and all the auditors were so surprised at this that they lowered their eyes. The remark spread directly; nobody was able to blame the Père de la Chaise. He was generally regretted, for he had done much good and never harm except in self-defence. Maréchal, first surgeon of the King, and possessed of his confidence, related once to me and Madame de Saint Simon, a very important anecdote referring to this time. He said that the King, talking to him privately of the Père de la Chaise, and praising him for his attachment, related one of the great proofs he had given of it. A few years before his death the Père said that he felt getting old, and that the King might soon have to choose a new confessor; he begged that that confessor might be chosen from among the Jesuits, that he knew them well, that they were far from deserving all that had been said against them, but—still—he knew them well—and that attachment for the King and desire for his safety induced him to conjure him to act as he requested; because the

company contained many sorts of minds and characters which could not be answered for, and must not be reduced to despair, and that the King must not incur a risk—that in fact an unlucky blow is soon given, and had been given before then. Maréchal turned pale at this recital of the King, and concealed as well as he could the disorder it caused in him. We must remember that Henry IV. recalled the Jesuits, and loaded them with gifts merely from fear of them. The King was not superior to Henry IV. He took care not to forget the communication of the Père de la Chaise, or expose himself to the vengeance of the company by choosing a confessor out of their limits. He wanted to live, and to live in safety. He requested the Ducs de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers to make secret inquiries for a proper person. They fell into a trap made, were dupes themselves, and the Church and State the victims.

The Père Tellier in fact was chosen as successor of Père de la Chaise, and a terrible successor he made. Harsh, exact, laborious, enemy of all dissipation, of all amusement, of all society, incapable of associating even with his colleagues, he demanded no leniency for himself and accorded none to others. His brain and his health were of iron: his conduct was so also; his nature was savage and cruel. He was profoundly false, deceitful, hidden under a thousand folds; and when he could show himself and make himself feared, he yielded nothing, laughed at the most express promises when he no longer cared to keep to them, and pursued with fury those who had trusted to them. He

was the terror even of the Jesuits, and was so violent to them that they scarcely dared approach him. His exterior kept faith with his interior. He would have been terrible to meet in a dark lane. His physiognomy was cloudy, false, terrible; his eyes were burning, evil, extremely squinting; his aspect struck all with dismay. The whole aim of his life was to advance the interests of his Society; that was his God; his life had been absorbed in that study: surprisingly ignorant, insolent, impudent, impetuous without measure and without discretion, all means were good that furthered his designs.

The first time Père Tellier saw the King in his cabinet, after having been presented to him, there was nobody but Bloin and Fagon in a corner. Fagon, bent two double and leaning on his stick, watched the interview and studied the physiognomy of this new personage—his duckings, and scrapings, and his words. The King asked him if he were a relation of MM. le Tellier. The good father humbled himself in the dust. "I, sire!" answered he, "a relative of MM. le Tellier! I am very different from that. I am a poor peasant of Lower Normandy, where my father was a farmer." Fagon, who watched him in every movement, twisted himself up to look at Bloin, and said, pointing to the Jesuit: "Monsieur, what a cursed ——!" Then shrugging his shoulders, he curved over his stick again. It turned out that he was not mistaken in his strange judgment of a confessor. This Tellier made all the grimaces, not to say the hypocritical monkey-tricks of a man who was afraid of his place, and only took it out of deference to his company.

I have dwelt thus upon this new confessor, because from him have come the incredible tempests under which the Church, the State, knowledge and doctrine, and many good people of all kinds, are still groaning; and because I had a more intimate acquaintance with this terrible personage than had any man at the Court. He introduced himself to me in fact, to my surprise; and although I did all in my power to shun his acquaintance, I could not succeed. He was too dangerous a man to be treated with anything but great prudence.

During the autumn of this year, he gave a sample of his quality in the part he took in the destruction of the celebrated monastery of Port Royal des Champs. I need not dwell at any great length upon the origin and progress of the two religious parties, the Jansenists and the Molinists; enough has been written on both sides to form a whole library. It is enough for me to say that the Molinists were so called because they adopted the views expounded by the Père Molina in a book he wrote against the doctrines of St. Augustin and of the Church of Rome, upon the subject of spiritual grace. The Père Molina was a Jesuit, and it was by the Jesuits his book was brought forward and supported. Finding, however, that the views it expounded met with general opposition, not only throughout France, but at Rome, they had recourse to their usual artifices on feeling themselves embarrassed, turned themselves into accusers instead of defendants, and invented a heresy that had neither author nor follower, which they attributed to Cornelius Jansenius, Bishop of Ypres. Many and long were the discussions

at Rome upon this ideal heresy, invented by the Jesuits solely for the purpose of weakening the adversaries of Molina. To oppose his doctrines was to be a Jansenist. That in substance was what was meant by Jansenism.

At the monastery of Port Royal des Champs, a number of holy and learned personages lived in retirement. Some wrote, some gathered youths around them, and instructed them in science and piety. The finest moral works, works which have thrown the most light upon the science and practice of religion, and have been found so by everybody, issued from their hands. These men entered into the quarrel against Molinism. This was enough to excite against them the hatred of the Jesuits, and to determine that body to attempt their destruction.

They were accused of Jansenism, and defended themselves perfectly; but at the same time they carried the war into the enemy's camp, especially by the ingenious "Provincial Letters" of the famous Pascal.

The quarrel grew more hot between the Jesuits and Port Royal, and was telling against the former, when the Père Tellier brought all his influence to bear, to change the current of success. He was, as I have said, an ardent man, whose divinity was his Molinism, and the company to which he belonged. Confessor to the King, he saw himself in a good position to exercise unlimited authority. He saw that the King was very ignorant, and prejudiced upon all religious matters; that he was surrounded by people as ignorant and as prejudiced as himself, Madame de Maintenon, M. de Beauvilliers, M. de Chevreuse, and

others, and he determined to take good advantage of this state of things. Step by step he gained over the King to his views, and convinced him that the destruction of the monastery of Port Royal des Champs was a duty which he owed to his conscience, and the cause of religion. This point gained, the means to destroy the establishment were soon resolved on.

There was another monastery called Port Royal, at Paris, in addition to the one in question. It was now pretended, that the latter had only been allowed to exist by tolerance, and that it was necessary one should cease to exist. Of the two, it was alleged that it was better to preserve the one at Paris. A decree in council was, therefore, rendered, in virtue of which, on the night from the 28th to the 29th of October, the abbey of Port Royal des Champs was secretly invested by troops, and on the next morning, the officer in command made all the inmates assemble, showed them a *lettre de cachet*, and without giving them more than a quarter of an hour's warning, carried off everybody and everything. He had brought with him many coaches, with an elderly woman in each; he put the nuns in these coaches, and sent them away to their destinations, which were different monasteries, at ten, twenty, thirty, forty, and even fifty leagues distant, each coach accompanied by mounted archers, just as public women are carried away from a house of ill-fame! I pass in silence all the accompaniments to this scene, so touching and so strangely new. There have been entire volumes written upon it.

The treatment that these nuns received in their

various prisons, in order to force them to sign a condemnation of themselves, is the matter of other volumes, which in spite of the vigilance of the oppressors, were soon in everybody's hands; public indignation so burst out, that the Court and the Jesuits even, were embarrassed with it. But the Père Tellier was not a man to stop half-way anywhere. He finished this matter directly; decree followed decree, *lettres de cachet* followed *lettres de cachet.* The families who had relatives buried in the cemetery of Port Royal des Champs, were ordered to exhume and carry them elsewhere. All the others were thrown into the cemetery of an adjoining parish, with the indecency that may be imagined. Afterwards, the house, the church, and all the buildings were razed to the ground, so that not one stone was left upon another. All the materials were sold, the ground was ploughed up, and sown—not with salt, it is true, but that was all the favour it received! The scandal at this, reached even to Rome. I have restricted myself to this simple and short recital of an expedition so military and so odious.

CHAPTER XIX.

Death of D'Avaux—A quarrel about a window—Louvois and the King—Anecdote of Boisseuil—Madame de Maintenon and M. De Beauvilliers—Harcourt proposed for the Council—His disappointment—Death of M. le Prince—His character—Treatment of his wife —His love adventures—His madness—A confessor brought—nobody regrets him.

The death of D'Avaux, who had formerly been our ambassador in Holland, occurred in the early part of this year (1709). D'Avaux was one of the first to hear of the project of William of Orange upon England, when that project was still only in embryo, and kept profoundly secret. He apprised the King (Louis XIV.) of it, but was laughed at. Barillon, then our ambassador in England, was listened to in preference. He, deceived by Sunderland, and the other perfidious ministers of James II., assured our Court that D'Avaux's reports were mere chimeras. It was not until it was impossible any longer to doubt, that credit was given to them. The steps that we then took, instead of disconcerting all the measures of the conspirators, as we could have done, did not interfere with the working out of any one of their plans. All liberty was left, in fact, to William, to carry out his scheme. The anecdote which explains how this happened is so curious, that it deserves to be mentioned here.

Louvois who was then minister of war, was also superintendent of the buildings. The King, who liked building, and who had cast off all his mistresses, had pulled down the little porcelain Trianon he had made for Madame de Montespan, and was rebuilding it in the form it still retains. One day he perceived, for his glance was most searching, that one window was a trifle narrower than the others. He showed it to Louvois, in order that it might be altered, which as it was not then finished, was easy to do. Louvois, sustained that the window was all right. The King insisted then, and on the morrow also, but Louvois, pig-headed and inflated with his authority would not yield.

The next day the King saw Le Notre in the gallery. Although his trade was gardens rather than houses, the King did not fail to consult him upon the latter. He asked him if he had been to Trianon. Le Notre replied that he had not. The King ordered him to go. On the morrow he saw Le Notre again; same question, same answer. The King comprehended the reason of this, and a little annoyed, commanded him to be there that afternoon at a given time. Le Notre did not dare to disobey this time. The King arrived, and Louvois being present, they returned to the subject of the window, which Louvois obstinately said was as broad as the rest. The King wished Le Notre to measure it, for he knew, that, upright and true, he would openly say what he found. Louvois piqued, grew angry. The King, who was not less so, allowed him to say his say. Le Notre, meanwhile, did not stir. At last, the King made him go, Louvois still grumbling, and maintaining

his assertion with audacity and little measure. Le Notre measured the window, and said that the King was right by several inches. Louvois still wished to argue, but the King silenced him, and commanded him to see that the window was altered at once, contrary to custom abusing him most harshly.

What annoyed Louvois most was, that this scene passed not only before all the officers of the buildings, but in presence of all who followed the King in his promenades, nobles, courtiers, officers of the guard, and others, even all the rolete. The dressing given to Louvois was smart and long, mixed with reflections upon the fault of this window, which, not noticed so soon, might have spoiled all the façade, and compelled it to be re-built.

Louvois, who was not accustomed to be thus treated, returned home in fury, and like a man in despair. His familiars were frightened, and in their disquietude angled to learn what had happened. At last he told them, said he was lost, and that for a few inches the King forgot all his services, which had led to so many conquests ; he declared that henceforth he would leave the trowel to the King, bring about a war, and so arrange matters that the King should have good need of him !

He soon kept his word. He caused a war to grow out of the affair of the double election of Cologne, of the Prince of Bavaria, and of the Cardinal of Furstemberg; he confirmed it in carrying the flames into the Palatinate, and in leaving, as I have said, all liberty to the project upon England; he put the finishing

touch to his work by forcing the Duke of Savoy into the arms of his enemies, and making him become, by the position of his country, our enemy, the most difficult and the most ruinous. All that I have here related was clearly brought to light in due time.

Boisseuil died shortly after D'Avaux. He was a tall, big man, warm and violent, a great gambler, bad tempered,—who often treated M. le Grand and Madame d'Armagnac, great people as they were, so that the company were ashamed,—and who swore in the saloon of Marly as if he had been in a tap-room. He was feared; and he said to women whatever came uppermost when the fury of a cut-throat seized him. During a journey the King and Court made to Nancy, Boisseuil one evening sat down to play in the house of one of the courtiers. A player happened to be there who played very high. Boisseuil lost a good deal, and was very angry. He thought he perceived that this gentleman, who was only permitted on account of his play, was cheating, and made such good use of his eyes that he soon found this was the case, and all on a sudden stretched across the table and seized the gambler's hand, which he held upon the table, with the cards he was going to deal. The gentleman, very much astonished, wished to withdraw his hand, and was angry. Boisseuil, stronger than he, said that he was a rogue, and that the company should see it, and immediately shaking his hand with fury put in evidence his deceit. The player, confounded, rose and went away. The game went on, and lasted long into the night. When finished, Boisseuil went away. As

he was leaving the door he found a man stuck against the wall—it was the player—who called him to account for the insult he had received. Boisseuil replied that he should give him no satisfaction, and that he was a rogue.

"That may be," said the player, "but I don't like to be told so."

They went away directly and fought. Boisseuil received two wounds, from one of which he was like to die. The other escaped without injury.

I have said, that after the affair of M. de Cambrai, Madame de Maintenon had taken a rooted dislike to M. de Beauvilliers. She had become reconciled to him in appearance during the time that Monseigneur de Bourgogne was a victim to the calumnies of M. de Vendôme, because she had need of him. Now that Monseigneur de Bourgogne was brought back to favour, and M. de Vendôme was disgraced, her antipathy for M. de Beauvilliers burst out anew, and she set her wits to work to get rid of him from the Council of State, of which he was a member. The witch wished to introduce her favourite Harcourt there in his place, and worked so well to bring about this result that the King promised he should be received.

His word given, or rather snatched from him, the King was embarrassed as to how to keep it, for he did not wish openly to proclaim Harcourt minister. It was agreed, therefore, that at the next Council Harcourt should be present, as though by accident, in the King's ante-chamber; that, Spanish matters being brought up, the King should propose to consult

Harcourt, and immediately after should direct search to be made for him, to see if, by chance, he was close at hand; that upon finding him, he should be conducted to the Council, made to enter and seat himself, and ever afterwards be regarded as a Minister of State.

This arrangement was kept extremely secret, according to the express commands of the King. I knew it, however, just before it was to be executed, and I saw at once that the day of Harcourt's entry into the Council would be the day of M. de Beauvilliers' disgrace. I sent, therefore, at once for M. de Beauvilliers, begging him to come to my house immediately, and that I would then tell him why I could not come to him. Without great precaution everything becomes known at Court.

In less than half-an-hour M. de Beauvilliers arrived, tolerably disturbed at my message. I asked him if he knew anything, and I turned him about, less to pump him than to make him ashamed of his ignorance, and to persuade him the better afterwards to do what I wished. When I had well trotted out his ignorance, I apprised him of what I had just learnt. He was astounded; he so little expected it! I had not much trouble to persuade him that, although his expulsion might not yet be determined on, the intrusion of Harcourt must pave the way for it. He admitted to me that for some days he had found the King cold and embarrassed with him, but that he had paid little attention to the circumstance, the reason of which was now clear. There was no time to lose. In twenty-four

hours all would be over. I therefore took the liberty in the first instance of scolding him for his profound ignorance of what passed at the Court, and was bold enough to say to him that he had only to thank himself for the situation he found himself in. He let me say to the end without growing angry, then smiled, and said, "Well! what do you think I ought to do?"

That was just what I wanted. I replied that there was only one course open to him, and that was to have an interview with the King early the next morning; to say to him, that he had been informed Harcourt was about to enter the Council; that he thought the affairs of State would suffer rather than otherwise if Harcourt did so; and finally, to allude to the change that had taken place in the King's manner towards him lately, and to say, with all respect, affection, and submission, that he was equally ready to continue serving the King or to give up his appointments, as his Majesty might desire.

M. de Beauvilliers took pleasure in listening to me. He embraced me closely, and promised to follow the course I had marked out.

The next morning I went straight to him, and learned that he had perfectly succeeded. He had spoken exactly as I had suggested. The King appeared astonished and piqued that the secret of Harcourt's entry into the Council was discovered. He would not hear a word as to resignation of office on the part of M. de Beauvilliers, and appeared more satisfied with him than ever. Whether, without this interview, he would have been lost, I know not, but

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by the coldness and embarrassment of the King before that interview, and during the first part of it, I am nearly persuaded that he would. M. de Beauvilliers embraced me again very tenderly—more than once.

As for Harcourt, sure of his good fortune, and scarcely able to contain his joy, he arrived at the meeting place. Time ran on. During the Council there are only the most subaltern people in the ante-chambers and a few courtiers who pass that way to go from one wing to another. Each of these subalterns eagerly asked M. d'Harcourt what he wanted, if he wished for anything, and importuned him strongly. He was obliged to remain there, although he had no pretext. He went and came, limping with his stick, not knowing what to reply to the passers-by, or the attendants by whom he was remarked. At last, after waiting long, he returned as he came, much disturbed at not having been called. He sent word so to Madame de Maintenon, who, in her turn, was as much disturbed, the King not having said a word to her, and she not having dared to say a word to him. She consoled Harcourt, hoping that at the next Council he would be called. At her wish he waited again, as before, during another Council, but with as little success. He was very much annoyed, comprehending that the affair had fallen through.

Madame de Maintenon did not, however, like to be defeated in this way. After waiting some time she spoke to the King, reminding him what he had promised to do. The King replied in confusion, that he had thought better of it; that Harcourt was on bad

terms with all the Ministers, and might, if admitted to the Council, cause them much embarrassment; he preferred, therefore, things to remain as they were. This was said in a manner that admitted of no reply. Madame de Maintenon felt herself beaten; Harcourt was in despair. M. de Beauvilliers was quite re-established in the favour of the King. I pretended to have known nothing of this affair, and innocently asked many questions about it when all was over. I was happy to the last degree that everything had turned out so well.

M. le Prince, who for more than two years had not appeared at the Court, died at Paris a little after midnight on the night between Easter Sunday and Monday the last of March and first of April, and in his seventy-sixth year. No man had ever more ability of all kinds, —extending even to the arts and mechanics,—more valour, and, when it pleased him, more discernment, grace, politeness, and nobility. But then no man had ever before so many useless talents, so much genius of no avail, or an imagination so calculated to be a bugbear to itself and a plague to others. Abjectly and vilely servile even to lackeys, he scrupled not to use the lowest and paltriest means to gain his ends. Unnatural son, cruel father, terrible husband, detestable master, pernicious neighbour; without friendship, without friends—incapable of having any—jealous, suspicious, ever restless, full of slyness and artifices to discover and to scrutinise all, (in which he was unceasingly occupied, aided by an extreme vivacity and a surprising penetration,) choleric and headstrong to ex-

cess even for trifles, difficult of access, never in accord with himself, and keeping all around him in a tremble; to conclude, impetuosity and avarice were his masters, which monopolised him always. With all this he was a man difficult to be proof against when he put in play the pleasing qualities he possessed.

Madame la Princesse, his wife, was his continual victim. She was disgustingly ugly, virtuous, and foolish, a little hump-backed, and stunk like a skunk, even from a distance. All these things did not hinder M. le Prince from being jealous of her even to fury up to the very last. The piety, the indefatigable attention of Madame la Princesse, her sweetness, her novice-like submission, could not guarantee her from frequent injuries, or from kicks, and blows with the fist, which were not rare. She was not mistress even of the most trifling things; she did not dare to propose or ask anything. He made her set out from one place to another the moment the fancy took him. Often when seated in their coach he made her descend, or return from the end of the street, then re-commence the journey after dinner, or the next day. This see-sawing lasted once fifteen days running, before a trip to Fontainebleau. At other times he sent for her from church, made her quit high mass, and sometimes sent for her the moment she was going to receive the sacrament; she was obliged to return at once and put off her communion to another occasion. It was not that he wanted her, but it was merely to gratify his whim that he thus troubled her.

He was always of uncertain habits, and had four

dinners ready for him every day; one at Paris, one at Ecouen, one at Chantilly, and one where the Court was. But the expense of this arrangement was not great; he dined on soup, and the half of a fowl roasted upon a crust of bread; the other half serving for the next day. He rarely invited anybody to dinner, but when he did, no man could be more polite or attentive to his guests.

Formerly he had been in love with several ladies of the Court; then, nothing cost too much. He was grace, magnificence, gallantry in person—a Jupiter transformed into a shower of gold. Now he disguised himself as a lackey, another time as a female broker in articles for the toilette; and now in another fashion. He was the most ingenious man in the world. He once gave a grand fête solely for the purpose of retarding the journey into Italy of a lady with whom he was enamoured, with whom he was on good terms, and whose husband he amused by making verses. He hired all the houses on one side of a street near St. Sulpice, furnished them, and pierced the connecting walls, in order to be able thus to reach the place of rendezvous without being suspected.

Jealous and cruel to his mistresses, he had, amongst others, the Marquise de Richelieu; whom I name, because she is not worth the trouble of being silent upon. He was hopelessly smitten, and spent millions upon her and to learn her movements. He knew that the Comte de Roucy shared her favours (it was for her that sagacious Comte proposed to put straw before the house in order to guarantee her against the sound of

the church bells, of which she complained). M. le Prince reproached her for favouring the Count. She defended herself; but he watched her so closely, that he brought home the offence to her without her being able to deny it. The fear of losing a lover so rich as was M. le Prince furnished her on the spot with an excellent suggestion for putting him at ease. She proposed to make an appointment at her own house with the Comte de Roucy, M. le Prince's people to lie in wait, and when the Comte appeared, to make away with him. Instead of the success she expected from a proposition so humane and ingenious, M. le Prince was so horror-struck, that he warned the Comte de Roucy, and never saw the Marquise de Richelieu again all his life.

The most surprising thing was, that with so much ability, penetration, activity, and valour as had M. le Prince, with the desire to be as great a warrior as the Great Condé, his father, he could never succeed in understanding even the first elements of the military art. Instructed as he was by his father, he never acquired the least aptitude in war. It was a profession he was not born for, and for which he could not qualify himself by study.

During the last fifteen or twenty years of his life, he was accused of something more than fieriness and ferocity. Wanderings were noticed in his conduct, which were not exhibited in his own house alone. Entering one morning into the apartment of the Maréchale de Noailles (she herself has related this to me) as her bed was being made, and there being only the counterpane

to put on, he stopped short at the door, crying with transport, "Oh, the nice bed, the nice bed," took a spring, leaped upon the bed, rolled himself upon it seven or eight times, then descended and made his excuses to the Maréchale, saying that her bed was so clean and so well made, that he could not hinder himself from jumping upon it; and this, although there had never been anything between them, and when the Maréchale, who all her life had been above suspicion, was at an age at which she could not give birth to any. Her servants remained stupified, and she as much as they. She got out of the difficulty by laughing and treating it as a joke.' It was whispered that there were times when M. le Prince believed himself a dog, or some other beast, whose manners he imitated; and I have known people very worthy of faith who have assured me they have seen him at the going to bed of the King suddenly throw his head into the air several times running, and open his mouth quite wide, like a dog while barking, yet without making a noise. It is certain, that for a long time nobody saw him except a single valet, who had control over him, and who did not annoy him.

In the latter part of his life he attended in a ridiculously minute manner to his diet and its results, and entered into discussions which drove his doctors to despair. Fever and gout at last attacked him, and he augmented them by the course he pursued. Finot, our physician and his, at times knew not what to do with him. What embarrassed Finot most, as he related to us more than once, was

that M. le Prince would eat nothing, for the simple reason, as he alleged, that he was dead, and that dead men did not eat! It was necessary, however, that he should take something, or he would have really died. Finot, and another doctor who attended him, determined to agree with him that he was dead, but to maintain that dead men sometimes eat. They offered to produce dead men of this kind; and, in point of fact, led to M. le Prince some persons unknown to him, who pretended to be dead, but who ate nevertheless. This trick succeeded; but he would never eat except with these men and Finot. On that condition he ate well, and this jealousy lasted a long time, and drove Finot to despair by its duration; who, nevertheless, sometimes nearly died of laughter in relating to us what passed at these repasts, and the conversation from the other world heard there.

M. le Prince's malady augmenting, Madame la Princesse grew bold enough to ask him if he did not wish to think of his conscience and to see a confessor? He amused himself tolerably long in refusing to do so. Some months before he had seen in secret Père de la Tour. He had sent to the reverend father asking him to come by night and disguised. Père de la Tour, surprised to the last degree at so wild a proposition, replied that the respect he owed to the cloth would prevent him visiting M. le Prince in disguise; but that he would come in his ordinary attire. M. le Prince agreed to this last imposed condition. He made the Père de la Tour enter at night by a little back door, at which an attendant was in waiting to receive him.

He was led by this attendant, who had a lantern in one hand and a key in the other, through many long and obscure passages, and through many doors, which were opened and closed upon him as he passed. Having arrived at last at the sick chamber he confessed M. le Prince, and was conducted out of the house in the same manner and by the same way as before. These visits were repeated during several months.

The Prince's malady rapidly increased and became extreme. The doctors found him so ill on the night of Easter Sunday that they proposed to him the sacrament for the next day. He disputed with them, and said that if he was so very bad it would be better to take the sacraments at once, and have done with them. They in their turn opposed this, saying there was no need of so much hurry. At last, for fear of incensing him, they consented, and he received all hurriedly the last sacraments. A little while after he called M. le Duc to him, and spoke of the honours he wished at his funeral, mentioning those which had been omitted at the funeral of his father, but which he did not wish to be omitted from his. He talked of nothing but this and of the sums he had spent at Chantilly, until his reason began to wander.

Not a soul regretted him ; neither servants nor friends, neither child nor wife. Indeed the Princesse was so ashamed of her tears that she made excuses for them. This was scarcely to be wondered at.

CHAPTER XX.

Progress of the war—Simplicity of Chamillart—The Imperialists and the Pope—Spanish Affairs—Duc d'Orleans and Madame des Ursins—Arrest of Flotte in Spain—Discovery of the Intrigues of the Duc D'Orleans—Cabal against him—His Disgrace and its Consequences.

It is time now that I should speak of our military operations this year and of the progress of the war. Let me commence by stating the disposition of our armies at the beginning of the campaign.

Maréchal Boufflers, having become dangerously ill, was unable to take command in Flanders. Maréchal de Villars was accordingly appointed in his stead under Monseigneur, and with him served the King of England, under his incognito of the previous year, and M. le Duc de Berry, as volunteers. The Maréchal d'Harcourt was appointed to command upon the Rhine under Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne. M. d'Orleans commanded in Spain; Maréchal Berwick in Dauphiny; and the Duc de Noailles in Roussillon, as usual. The generals went to their destinations, but the Princes remained at the Court.

Before I relate what we did in war, let me here state the strange opposition of our ministers in their attempts to bring about peace. Since Villars had introduced Chamillart to Court, he had heard it said

that M. de Louvois did everybody's business as much as he could; and took it into his head that having succeeded to M. de Louvois he ought to act exactly like him. For some time past accordingly, Chamillart, with the knowledge of the King, had sent people to Holland and elsewhere to negociate for peace, although he had no right to do so, Torcy being the minister to whose department this business belonged. Torcy likewise sent people to Holland and elsewhere with a similar object, and these ambassadors of the two ministers, instead of working in common, did all in their power to thwart each other. They succeeded so well that it was said they seemed in foreign countries ministers of different powers, whose interests were quite opposed. This manner of conducting business gave a most injurious idea of our government, and tended very much to bring it into ridicule. Those who sincerely wished to treat with us, found themselves so embarrassed between the rival factions, that they did not know what to do; and others made our disagreements a plausible pretext for not listening to our propositions.

At last Torcy was so annoyed with the interference of Chamillart, that he called the latter to account for it, and made him sign an agreement by which he bound himself to enter into no negociations for peace and to mix himself in no foreign affairs; and so this absurdity came to an end.

In Italy, early this year, we received a check of no small importance. I have mentioned that we were invited to join in an Italian league, having for its

object to oppose the Emperor. We joined this league, but not before its existence had been noised abroad and put the allies on their guard as to the danger they ran of losing Italy. Therefore the Imperialists entered the Papal states, laid them under contribution, ravaged them, lived there in true Tartar style, and snapped their fingers at the Pope, who cried aloud as he could obtain no redress and no assistance. Pushed at last to extremity by the military occupation which desolated his states, he yielded to all the wishes of the Emperor, and recognised the Archduke as King of Spain. Philip V. immediately ceased all intercourse with Rome, and dismissed the nuncio from Madrid. The Imperialists, even after the Pope had ceded to their wishes, treated him with the utmost disdain, and continued to ravage his territories. The Imperialist minister at Rome, actually gave a comedy and a ball in his palace there, contrary to the express orders of the Pope, who had forbidden all kinds of amusement in this period of calamity. When remonstrated with by the Pope, this minister said that he had promised a fête to the ladies and could not break his word. The strangest thing is, that after this public instance of contempt the nephews of the Pope went to the fête, and the Pope had the weakness to suffer it.

In Spain, everything went wrong, and people began to think it would be best to give up that country to the house of Austria, under the hope that by this means the war would be terminated. It was therefore seriously resolved to recal all our troops from Spain, and to give orders to Madame des Ursins to quit the

country. Instructions were accordingly sent to this effect. The King and Queen of Spain, in the greatest alarm at such a violent determination, cried aloud against it, and begged that the execution of it might at least be suspended for a while.

At this, our King paused and called a Council to discuss the subject. It was ultimately agreed to leave sixty-six battalions of our troops to the King of Spain, but to withdraw all the rest. This compromise satisfied nobody. Those who wished to support Spain said this assistance was not enough. The other party said it was too much.

This determination being arrived at, it seemed as though the only thing to be done was to send M. d'Orleans to Spain to take command there. But now will be seen the effect of that mischievous pleasantry of his upon Madame de Maintenon and Madame des Ursins, the "she captain," and the "she lieutenant" —as he called them, in the gross language to which I have before alluded. Those two ladies had not forgiven him his witticism, and had determined to accomplish his disgrace. His own thoughtless conduct assisted them in bringing about this result.

The King one day asked him if he had much desire to return into Spain. He replied in a manner evidencing his willingness to serve, marking no eagerness. He did not notice that there might be a secret meaning hidden under this question. When he related to me what had passed between him and the King, I blamed the feebleness of his reply, and represented to him the ill-effect it would create if at such a time he evinced any desire

to keep out of the campaign. He appeared convinced by my arguments, and to wish with more eagerness than before to return to Spain.

A few days after, the King asked him, on what terms he believed himself with the Princesse des Ursins; and when M. d'Orleans replied that he believed himself to be on good terms with her, as he had done all in his power to be so, the King said that he feared it was not thus, since she had asked that he should not be again sent to Spain, saying that he had leagued himself with all her enemies there; and that a secretary of his, named Renaut, whom he had left behind him, kept up such strict and secret intercourse with those enemies, that she was obliged to demand his recal lest he might do wrong to the name of his master.

Upon this, M. d'Orleans replied that he was infinitely surprised at these complaints of Madame des Ursins, since he had done nothing to deserve them. The King, after reflecting for a moment, said he thought, all things considered, that M. d'Orleans had better not return to Spain. In a few days it was publicly known that he would not go. The withdrawal of so many of our troops from Spain was the reason alleged. At the same time the King gave orders to M. d'Orleans to send for his equipages from Spain, and added in his ear, that he had better send some one of sense for them, who might be the bearer of a protest, if Philip V. quitted his throne. At least this is what M. d'Orleans told me, although few people believed him in the end.

M. d'Orleans chose for this errand a man named Flotte, very skilful in intrigue, in which he had, so to

speak, been always brought up. He went straight to Madrid, and one of his first employments when he arrived there was to look for Renaut, the secretary just alluded to. But Renaut was nowhere to be found, nor could any news be heard of him. Flotte stayed some time in Madrid, and then went to the army which was still in quarters. He remained there three weeks, idling from quarter to quarter, saluting the Maréchal in command, who was much surprised at his long stay, and who pressed him to return into France. At last Flotte took leave of the Maréchal, asking him for an escort for himself and a commissary, with whom he meant to go in company across the Pyrenees. Twenty dragoons were given him as escort, and he and the commissary set out in a chaise.

They had not proceeded far before Flotte perceived that they were followed by other troops besides those guarding them. Flotte, fearing that something was meant by this, slipped a pocket-book into the hands of the commissary, requesting him to take care of it. Shortly afterwards the chaise was surrounded by troops, and stopped: the two travellers were made to alight. The commissary was ordered to give up the pocket-book, an order that he complied with very rapidly, and Flotte was made prisoner, and escorted back to the spot he had just left.

The news of this occurrence reached the King on the 12th of July, by the ordinary courier from Madrid. The King informed M. d'Orleans of it, who, having learnt it by a private courier six days before, affected nevertheless surprise, and said it was strange that one

of his people should have been thus arrested, and that as his Majesty was concerned, it was for him to demand the reason. The King replied, that in fact the injury regarded him more than M. d'Orleans, and that he would give orders to Torcy to write as was necessary to Spain.

It is not difficult to believe that such an explosion made a great noise, both in France and Spain; but the noise it made at first, was nothing to that which followed. A cabal was formed against Monsieur le Duc d'Orleans. It was said that he had plotted to place himself upon the Spanish throne, by driving out Philip V., under pretext of his incapacity, of the domination of Madame des Ursins, and of the abandonment of the country by France; that he had treated with Stanhope, commander of the English troops in Spain, and with whom he was known to be on friendly terms, in order to be protected by the Archduke. This was the report most widely spread. Others went further. In these M. d'Orleans was accused of nothing less than of intending to divorce himself from Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, as having been married to her by force; of intending to marry the sister of the Empress (widow of Charles II.), and of mounting with her upon the Spanish throne; to marry Madame d'Argenton, as the Queen Dowager was sure to have no children, and finally, to poison Madame d'Orleans.

Meanwhile the reply from Spain came not. The King and Monseigneur treated M. d'Orleans with a coldness which made him sorely ill at ease; the

majority of the courtiers, following this example, withdrew from him. He was left almost alone.

I learnt at last from M. d'Orleans how far he was deserving of public censure, and what had given colouring to the reports spread against him. He admitted to me, that several of the Spanish grandees had persuaded him that it was not possible the King of Spain could stand, and had proposed to him to hasten his fall, and take his place; that he had rejected this proposition with indignation, but had been induced to promise, that if Philip V. fell of himself, without hope of rising, he would not object to mount the vacant throne, believing that by so doing he would be doing good to our King, by preserving Spain to his house.

As soon as I heard this, I advised him to make a clean breast of it to the King, and to ask his pardon for having acted in this matter without his orders and without his knowledge. He thought my advice good, and acted upon it. But the King was too much under the influence of the enemies of M. d'Orleans, to listen favourably to what was said to him. The facts of the case, too, were much against M. d'Orleans. Both Renaut and Flotte had been entrusted with his secret. The former had openly leagued himself with the enemies of Madame des Ursins, and acted with the utmost imprudence. He had been privately arrested just before the arrival of Flotte. When this latter was arrested, papers were found upon him which brought everything to light. The views of M. d'Orleans and of those who supported him were clearly shown.

The King would not listen to anything in favour of his nephew.

The whole Court cried out against M. d'Orleans; never was such an uproar heard. He was accused of plotting to overthrow the King of Spain, he, a Prince of the blood, and so closely allied to the two crowns! Monseigneur, usually so plunged in apathy, roused himself to fury against M. d'Orleans, and insisted upon nothing less than a criminal prosecution. He insisted so strongly upon this, that the King, at last, consented that it should take place, and gave orders to the chancellor to examine the forms requisite in such a case. While the chancellor was about this work, I went to see him one day, and represented to him so strongly, that M. d'Orleans's misdemeanor did not concern France at all, and could only be judged before a Spanish tribunal, that the idea of a criminal trial was altogether abandoned almost immediately after. M. d'Orleans was allowed to remain in peace.

Madame des Ursins and Madame de Maintenon had so far triumphed, however, that M. d'Orleans found himself plunged in the deepest disgrace. He was universally shunned. Whenever he appeared, people flew away, so that they might not be seen in communication with him. His solitude was so great, that for a whole month only one friend entered his house. In the midst of this desertion, he had no resource but debauchery, and the society of his mistress, Madame d'Argenton. The disorder and scandal of his life had for a long time offended the King, the Court, and the public. They now unhappily con-

firmed everybody in the bad opinion they had formed of him. That the long disgrace he suffered continued to confirm him in his bad habits, and that it explains to some extent his after-conduct, there can be no doubt. But I must leave him now, and return to other matters.

CHAPTER XXI.

Danger of Chamillart—Witticism of d'Harcourt—Faults of Chamillart—Court intrigues against him—Behaviour of the courtiers—Influence of Madame de Maintenon—Dignified fall of Chamillart—He is succeeded by Voysin—First experience of the new Minister—The Campaign in Flanders—Battle of Malplaquet.

But, meanwhile, a great change had taken place at Court. Chamillart had committed the mistake of allowing the advancement of d'Harcourt to the head of an army. The poor man did not see the danger; and when warned of it, thought his cleverness would preserve him. Reports of his fall had already began to circulate, and d'Antin had been spoken of in his place. I warned his daughter Dreux, the only one of the family to whom it was possible to speak with profit. The mother, with little wit and knowledge of the Court, full of apparent confidence and sham cunning, received all advice ill. The brothers were imbecile, the son was a child and a simpleton, the two other daughters too light-headed. I had often warned Madame de Dreux of the enmity of the Duchesse de Bourgogne; and she had spoken to her on the subject. The Princesse had answered very coldly that she was mistaken, that she had no such enmity. At last I succeeded, in this indirect way, in forcing Chamillart to speak to the King on the reports that were abroad;

but he did so in a half-and-half way, and committed the capital mistake of not naming the successor which public rumour mentioned. The King appeared touched, and gave him all sorts of assurances of friendship, and made as if he liked him better than ever. I do not know if Chamillart was then near his destruction, and whether this conversation set him up again; but from the day it took place all reports died away, and the Court thought him perfectly re-established.

But his enemies continued to work against him. Madame de Maintenon and the Duchesse de Bourgogne abated not a jot in their enmity. The Maréchal d'Harcourt lost no opportunity of pulling him to pieces. One day, among others, he was declaiming violently against him at Madame de Maintenon's, whom he knew he should thus please. She asked him whom he would put in his place? "M. Fagon, Madame," he replied coldly. She laughed, but said this was not a thing to joke about; but he maintained seriously that the old doctor would make a much better minister than Chamillart, for he had some intelligence, which would make up for his ignorance of many matters, but what could be expected of a man who was ignorant and stupid too? The cunning Norman knew well the effect this strange parallel would have; and it is indeed inconceivable how damaging his sarcasm proved. A short time afterwards, d'Antin, wishing also to please, but more imprudent, insulted the son of Chamillart so grossly, and abused the father so publicly, that he was obliged afterwards to excuse himself.

The King held, for the first time in his life, a real

council of war. He told the Duc de Bourgogne of it, saying rather sharply: "Come, unless you prefer going to vespers." The council lasted nearly three hours, and was stormy. The Maréchals were freer in their language than usual, and complained of the Ministers. All fell upon Chamillart, who was accused, among other things, of matters that concerned Desmarets, on whom he finished by turning off the King's anger. Chamillart defended himself with so much anger that his voice was heard by people outside.

But he had of late heaped fault on fault. Besides setting Madame de Maintenon and the Duchesse de Bourgogne against him, he rather wantonly irritated Monseigneur, at that time more than ever under the government of Mademoiselle Choin. The latter had asked him a favour, and had been refused even with contempt. Various advances at reconciliation she made were also repulsed with contumely. Yet every one, even the Duchesse de Bourgogne, crawled before this creature—the favourite of the heir to the throne! Madame de Maintenon actually caused the King to offer her apartments at Versailles, which she refused, for fear of losing the liberty she enjoyed at Meudon. D'Antin, who saw all that was going on, became the soul of a conspiracy against Chamillart. It was infinitely well managed. Everything moved in order and harmony—always prudently, always knowingly.

The King, quietly attacked on all hands, was shaken; but he had many reasons for sticking to Chamillart. He was his own choice. No Minister had stood aside so completely, and allowed the King to receive all the

praise of whatever was done. Though the King's reason was, therefore, soon influenced, his heart was not so easily. But Madame de Maintenon was not discouraged. Monseigneur, urged by Mademoiselle Choin, had already spoken out to the King. She laboured to make him speak again; for, on the previous occasion, he had been listened to attentively.

So many machines could not be set in motion without some noise being heard abroad. There rose in the Court, I know not what confused murmurs, the origin of which could not be pointed out, publishing that either the State or Chamillart must perish; that already his ignorance had brought the kingdom within an ace of destruction; that it was a miracle this destruction had not yet come to pass; and that it would be madness to tempt Providence any longer. Some did not blush to abuse him; others praised his intentions, and spoke with moderation of faults that many people reproached him bitterly with. All admitted his rectitude, but maintained that a successor of some kind or other was absolutely necessary. Some, believing or trying to persuade others that they carried friendship to as far a point as was possible, protested that they should ever preserve this friendship, and would never forget the pleasure and the services that they had received from Chamillart; but delicately confessed that they preferred the interests of the State to their own personal advantage and the support they would lose; that, even if Chamillart were their brother, they would sorrowfully admit the necessity of removing him! At last nobody could understand either how

such a man could ever have been chosen, or how he could have remained so long in his place! All his faults and all his ridicules formed the staple of Court conversation. If anybody referred to the great things he had done, to the rapid gathering of armies after our disasters, people turned on their heels and walked away. Such were the presages of the fall of Chamillart.

The Maréchal de Boufflers, who had never forgiven the causes that led to the loss of Lille, joined in the attack on Chamillart; and assisted in exciting the King against him. Chamillart has since related to me that up to the last moment he had always been received equally graciously by the King—that is, up to two days before his fall. Then, indeed, he noticed that the King's countenance was embarrassed; and felt inclined to ask if he was displeasing to him, and to offer to retire. Had he done so he might, if we may judge from what transpired subsequently, have remained in office. But now Madame de Maintenon had come personally into the field, and believing herself sure of success, openly attacked Chamillart. What passed between her and the King was quite private and never related; but there seems reason to believe that she did not succeed without difficulty.

On Sunday morning, November 9, the King on entering the Council of State called the Duc de Beauvilliers to him, and requested him to go in the afternoon and tell Chamillart that he was obliged, for motives of public interest, to ask him to resign his office; but that, in order to give him a mark of his esteem and satisfaction with his services, he continued his pension

of Minister, that is to say, twenty thousand francs, and added as much more, with one to his son of twenty thousand francs likewise. He added that he should have liked to see Chamillart, but that at first it would grieve him too much: he was not to come till sent for; he might live in Paris, and go where he liked. The Duc de Beauvilliers did all he could to escape from carrying so harsh a message, but could only obtain permission to let the Duc de Chevreuse accompany him.

They went to Chamillart, and found him alone, working in his cabinet. The air of consternation with which they entered, told the unfortunate Minister that something disagreeable had happened; and without giving them time to speak, he said, with a serene and tranquil countenance, "What is the matter, gentlemen? If what you have to say concerns only me, you may speak: I have long been prepared for everything." This gentle firmness touched them still more. They could scarcely explain what they came about. Chamillart listened without any change of countenance, and said, with the same air and tone as at first: "The King is the master. I have endeavoured to serve him to the best of my ability. I hope some one else will please him better, and be more lucky." He then asked if he had been forbidden to write to the King, and being told not, he wrote a letter of respect and thanks, and sent it by the two Ducs, with a Memoir which he had just finished. He also wrote to Madame de Maintenon. He sent a verbal message to his wife; and without complaint, murmur, or sighs, got into his carriage, and drove to L'Etang. Both then and afterwards he showed the greatest

magnanimity. Every one went, from a sort of fashion, to visit him. When I went, the house looked as if a death had taken place; and it was frightful to see, in the midst of cries and tears, the dead man walking, speaking, with a quiet, gentle air, and serene brow,—unconstrained, unaffected, attentive to every one, not at all or scarcely different from what he was accustomed to be.

Chamillart, as I have said, had received permission to live at Paris if he liked; but soon afterwards he innocently gave umbrage to Madame de Maintenon, who was annoyed that his disgrace was not followed by general abandonment. She caused him to be threatened secretly, and he prudently left Paris, and went far away, under pretence of seeking for an estate to buy.

Next day after the fall of Chamillart, it became known that the triumph of Madame de Maintenon was completed, and that Voysin, her creature, was the succeeding secretary of state. This Voysin had the one indispensable quality for admission into the counsels of Louis XIV.—not a drop of noble blood in his veins. He had married, in 1683, the daughter of Trudaine. She had a very agreeable countenance, without any affectation. She appeared simple and modest, and occupied with her household and good works; but in reality, had sense, wit, cleverness, above all a natural insinuation, and the art of bringing things to pass without being perceived. She kept with great tact a magnificent house. It was she who received Madame de Maintenon at Dinan, when the King was besieging Namur; and as she had been instructed by M. de Luxembourg in the way to please that lady, succeeded

most effectually. Among her arts was her modesty, which led her prudently to avoid pressing herself on Madame de Maintenon, or showing herself more than was absolutely necessary. She was sometimes two whole days without seeing her. A trifle, luckily contrived, finished the conquest of Madame de Maintenon. It happened that the weather passed suddenly from excessive heat to a damp cold, which lasted a long time. Immediately, an excellent dressing-gown, simple, and well lined, appeared in the corner of the chamber. This present, by so much the more agreeable, as Madame de Maintenon had not brought any warm clothing, touched her also by its suddenness, and by its simple appearance, as if of its own accord.

In this way, the taste of Madame de Maintenon for Madame Voysin was formed and increased. Madame Voysin obtained an appointment for her husband, and coming to Paris, at last grew extremely familiar with Madame de Maintenon. Voysin himself had much need of the wife that Providence had given him. He was perfectly ignorant of everything but the duties of an Intendant. He was, moreover, rough and uncivil, as the courtiers soon found. He was never unjust for the sake of being so, nor was he bad naturally; but he knew nothing but authority, the King and Madame de Maintenon, whose will was unanswerable—his sovereign law and reason. The choice was settled between the King and Madame de Maintenon after supper, the day of Chamillart's fall. Voysin was conducted to the King by Bloin, after having received the orders and instructions of his benefactress. In the evening of

that day, the King found Madame Voysin with Madame de Maintenon, and kissed her several times to please his lady.

Voysin's first experience of the duties of his office was unpleasant. He was foolish enough, feeling his ignorance, to tell the King, that at the outset he should be obliged to leave everything to his Majesty, but that when he knew better, he would take more on himself. The King, to whom Chamillart used himself to leave everything, was much offended by this language; and drawing himself up, in the tone of a master, told Voysin to learn, once for all, that his duties were to receive and expedite orders, nothing else. He then took the projects brought to him, examined them, prescribed the measures he thought fit, and very stiffly sent away Voysin, who did not know where he was, and had great want of his wife to set his head to rights, and of Madame de Maintenon to give him completer lessons than she had yet been able to do. Shortly afterwards he was forbidden to send any orders without submitting them to the Maréchal de Boufflers. He was supple, and sure of Madame de Maintenon, and through her of the Maréchal, waited for time to release him from this state of tutelage; and showed nothing of his annoyance, especially to Boufflers himself.

Events soon happened to alter the position of the Maréchal de Boufflers.

Flanders, ever since the opening of the campaign, had been the principal object of attention. Prince Eugène and Marlborough, joined together, continued

their vast designs, and disdained to hide them. Their prodigious preparations spoke of sieges. Shall I say that we desired them, and that we thought of nothing but how to preserve, not use our army?

Tournai was the first place towards which the enemies directed their arms. After a short resistance it fell into their hands. Villars, as I have said, was commander in Flanders. Boufflers feeling that, in the position of affairs, such a post must weigh very heavily upon one man, and that in case of his death there was no one to take his place, offered to go to assist him. The King, after some little hesitation, accepted this magnanimous offer, and Boufflers set out. I say magnanimous offer, because Boufflers, loaded with honours and glory, might well have hoped to pass the rest of his life in repose. It was hardly possible, do what he might, that he could add to his reputation; while, on the other hand, it was not unlikely that he might be made answerable for the faults or shortcomings of others, and return to Paris stripped of some of the laurels that adorned his brow. But he thought only of the welfare of the State, and pressed the King to allow him to depart to Flanders. The King, as I have said, at last consented.

The surprise was great in the army when he arrived there. The general impression was that he was the bearer of news of peace. Villars received him with an air of joy and respect, and at once showed every willingness to act in concert with him. The two generals accordingly worked harmoniously together, taking no steps without consulting each other, and

showing great deference for each other's opinions. They were like one man.

After the fall of Tournai, our army took up position at Malplaquet, the right and the left supported by two woods, with hedges and woods before the centre, so that the plain was, as it were, cut in two. Marlborough and Prince Eugène marched in their turn, fearing lest Villars should embarrass them as they went towards Mons, which place they had resolved to besiege. They sent on a large detachment of their army, under the command of the Prince of Hesse, to watch ours. He arrived in sight of the camp at Malplaquet at the same time that we entered it, and was quickly warned of our existence by three cannon shots that Villars, out of braggadocio, fired by way of appeal to Marlborough and Prince Eugène. Some little firing took place this day and the next, the 10th of September, but without doing much harm on either side.

Marlborough and Prince Eugène, warned of the perilous state in which the Prince of Hesse was placed—he would have been lost if attacked—hastened at once to join him, and arrived in the middle of the morning of the 10th. Their first care was to examine the position of our army, and to do so, while waiting for their rear-guard, they employed a stratagem which succeeded admirably.

They sent several officers, who had the look of subalterns, to our lines, and asked to be allowed to speak to our officers. Their request was granted. Albergotti came down to them, and discoursed with them a long time. They pretended they came to see

whether peace could not be arranged, but they, in reality, spoke of little but compliments, which signified nothing. They stayed so long, under various pretexts, that at last we were obliged to threaten them in order to get rid of them. All this time a few of their best general officers on horseback, and a larger number of engineers and designers on foot, profited by these ridiculous colloquies to put upon paper drawings of our position, thus being able to see the best positions for their cannon, and the best mode, in fact, in which all their disposition might be made. We learnt this artifice afterwards from the prisoners.

It was decided that evening to give us battle on the morrow, although the deputies of the States-General, content with the advantages that had been already gained, and not liking to run the risk of failure, were opposed to an action taking place. They were, however, persuaded to agree, and on the following morning the battle began.

The struggle lasted many hours. But our position had been badly chosen, and, in spite of every effort, we were unable to maintain it. Villars, in the early part of the action, received a wound which incapacitated him from duty. All the burden of command fell upon Boufflers. He bore it well; but after a time, finding his army dispersed, his infantry overwhelmed, the ground slipping from under his feet, he thought only of beating a good and honourable retreat. He led away his army in such good order, that the enemy were unable to interfere with it in the slightest degree. During all the march, which lasted until night, we did

not lose a hundred stragglers, and carried off all the cannon with the exception of a few pieces. The enemy passed the night upon the battle-field, in the midst of twenty-five thousand dead, and marched towards Mons the next evening. They frankly admitted that in men killed and wounded, in general officers and privates, in flags and standards, they had lost more than we. The battle cost them, in fact, seven lieutenant-generals, five other generals, about eighteen hundred officers killed or wounded, and more than fifteen thousand men killed or rendered unfit for service. They openly avowed, also, how much they had been surprised by the valour of the majority of our troops, above all of the cavalry, and did not dissimulate that we should have gained the day, had we been better led.

Why the Maréchal Villars waited ten days to be attacked in a position so disadvantageous, instead of at once marching upon the enemies and overcoming, as he might at first easily have done, it is difficult to understand. He threw all the blame upon his wound, although it was well known that the fate of the day was decided long before he was hurt.

Although forced to retire, our men burned with eagerness to engage the enemies again. Mons had been laid siege to. Boufflers tried to make the besiegers give up the undertaking. But his men were without bread and without pay; the subaltern officers were compelled to eat the regulation bread; the general officers were reduced to the most miserable shifts, and were, like the privates, without pay, oftentimes for seven or eight days running. There was

no meat and no bread for the army. The common soldiers were reduced to herbs and roots for all sustenance. Under these circumstances it was found impossible to persevere in trying to save Mons. Nothing but subsistence could be thought of.

The Court had now become so accustomed to defeats, that a battle lost as was Malplaquet seemed half a victory. Boufflers sent a courier to the King with an account of the event, and spoke so favourably of Villars that all the blame of the defeat fell upon himself. Villars was everywhere pitied and applauded, although he had lost an important battle, when it was in his power to beat the enemies in detail, and render them unable to undertake the siege of Mons, or any other siege. If Boufflers was indignant at this, he was still more indignant at what happened afterwards. In the first dispatch he sent to the King he promised to send another as soon as possible, giving full details, with propositions as to how the vacancies which had occurred in the army might be filled up. On the very evening he sent off his second dispatch, he received intelligence that the King had already taken his dispositions with respect to these vacancies, without having consulted him upon a single point. This was the first reward Boufflers received for the services he had just rendered, and that, too, from a King who had said in public that without Boufflers all was lost, and that assuredly it was God who had inspired him with the idea of going to the army. From that time Boufflers fell into a disgrace from which he never recovered. He had the courage to

appear as usual at the Court; but a worm was gnawing him within and destroyed him. Oftentimes he opened his heart to me without rashness, and without passing the strict limits of his virtue; but the poignard was in his heart, and neither time nor reflection could dull its edge. He did nothing but languish afterwards, yet without being confined to his bed or to his chamber, but did not live more than two years. Villars, on the contrary, was in greater favour than ever. He arrived at Court triumphant. The King made him occupy an apartment at Versailles, so that his wound might be well attended to.

What a contrast! What a difference between the services, the merit, the condition, the virtue, the situation of these two men! What inexhaustible funds of reflection! *

* It is as well to point out that the silly and ignorant, who are unable to emancipate themselves from the influence of the title of Great, usually given to Louis XIV., and who are yet candid enough to admit that in conduct and tone of thought he never rose above the level of a pious dancing-master, or conscientious master of the ceremonies, usually fall back on his mysterious tact in choosing men of genius! Every page of Saint Simon proves that imbecility, properly combined with dishonesty, was the true passport to his favour. Literature is good enough or servile enough to be grateful to him for not stifling its development. Is France so sure that it might not have done better?

CHAPTER XXII.

Disgrace of the Duc d'Orleans—I endeavour to separate him from Madame d'Argenton—Extraordinary Reports—My various Colloquies with him —The Separation—Conduct of Madame d'Argenton—Death and Character of M. le Duc—The After-Suppers of the King.

I HAVE described in its proper place the profound fall of M. le Duc d'Orleans and the neglect in which he lived, out of all favour with the King, hated by Madame de Maintenon and Monseigneur, and regarded with an unfavourable eye by the public on account of the scandals of his private life. I had long seen that the only way in which he could hope to recover his position would be to give up his mistress, Madame d'Argenton, with whom he had been on terms of intimacy for many years past, to the knowledge and the scandal of all the world. I knew it would be a bold and dangerous game to play, to try to persuade him to separate himself from a woman he had known and loved so long; but I determined to engage in it, nevertheless, and I looked about for some one to assist me in this enterprise. At once I cast my eyes upon the Maréchal de Besons, who for many long years had been the bosom friend of M. d'Orleans. He applauded the undertaking, but doubted, he said, its success; nevertheless he promised to aid me to the utmost of his power, and, it will be seen, was as

good as his word. For some time I had no opportunity of accosting M. d'Orleans, and was obliged to keep my project in abeyance, but I did not lose sight of it; and when I saw my way clear, I took the matter in hand, determined to strain every nerve in order to succeed.

It was just at the commencement of the year 1710, that I first spoke to M. d'Orleans. I began by extracting from him an admission of the neglect into which he had fallen—the dislike of the King, the hatred of Monseigneur, who accused him of wishing to replace his son in Spain; that of Madame de Maintenon, whom he had offended by his bon-mot; the suspicions of the public, who talked of his chemical experiments—and then, throwing off all fear of consequences, I said that before he could hope to draw back his friends and the world to him, he must reinstate himself in the favour of the King. He appeared struck with what I had said, rose after a profound silence, paced to and fro, and then asked, "But how?" Seeing the opportunity so good, I replied in a firm and significant tone, "How? I know well enough, but I will never tell you; and yet it is the only thing to do." "Ah, I understand you," said he, as though struck with a thunderbolt; "I understand you perfectly;" and he threw himself upon the chair at the end of the room. There he remained some time, without speaking a word, yet agitated and sighing, and with his eyes lowered. I broke silence at last, by saying that the state in which he was in had touched me to the quick, and that I had determined, in conjunction with the Maréchal de Besons, to speak to him upon the subject, and to propose the only means

by which he could hope to bring about a change in his position. He considered some time, and then giving me encouragement to proceed, I entered at some length upon the proposal I had to make to him, and left him evidently affected by what I had said, when I thought I had for the time gone far enough.

The next day, Thursday, January 2nd, Besons, to whom I had written, joined me; and after I had communicated to him what had passed the previous evening, we hastened to M. d'Orleans. He received us well, and we at once commenced an attack. In order to aid my purpose as much as possible I repeated to M. d'Orleans, at this meeting, the odious reports that were in circulation against him, viz., that he intended to repudiate his wife forced upon him by the King, in order to marry the Queen Dowager of Spain, and by means of her gold to open up a path for himself to the Spanish throne; that he intended to wait for his new wife's death, and then marry Madame d'Argenton, to whom the genii had promised a throne; and I added, that it was very fortunate that the Duchesse d'Orleans had safely passed through the dangers of her confinement, for already some wretches had begun to spread the saying, that he was not the son of Monsieur for nothing. (An allusion to the death of Henriette d'Angleterre.)

On hearing these words, the Duc was seized with a terror that cannot be described, and at the same time with a grief that is above expression. I took advantage of the effect my discourse had had upon him, to show how necessary it was he should make a great effort in

order to win back the favour of the King and of the public. I represented to him that the only way to do this was to give up Madame d'Argenton, at once and for ever, and to announce to the King that he had done so. At first he would not hear of such a step, and I was obliged to employ all my eloquence and all my firmness too, to make him listen to reason. One great obstacle in our way was the repugnance of M. d'Orleans for his wife. He had been married, as I have described in the early part of these memoirs, against his will, and with no sort of affection for the woman he was given to. It was natural that he should look upon her with dislike ever since she had become his wife. I did what I could to speak in praise of Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, and Besons aided me; but we did little else than waste our breath for some time. Our praises in fact irritated M. d'Orleans, and to such a point, that no longer screening things or names, he told us what we should have wished not to hear, but what it was very lucky we did hear. He had suspicions, in fact, of his wife's honour; but fortunately I was able to prove clearly and decisively, that those suspicions were unfounded, and I did so. The joy of M. d'Orleans upon finding he had been deceived, was great indeed; and when we separated from him after mid-day, in order to go to dinner, I saw that a point was gained.

A little before three o'clock I returned to M. d'Orleans, whom I found alone in his cabinet with Besons. He received me with pleasure, and made me seat myself between him and the Maréchal, whom he complimented

upon his diligence. Our conversation re-commenced. I returned to the attack with all the arguments I could muster, and the Maréchal supported me; but I saw with affright that M. d'Orleans was less reduced than when we had quitted him in the morning, and that he had sadly taken breath during our short absence. I saw that, if we were to succeed, we must make the best use we could of our time, and accordingly I brought all my powers into play in order to gain over M. d'Orleans.

Feeling that everything was now to be lost or gained, I spoke out with all the force of which I was capable, surprising and terrifying Maréchal Besons to such a point, with my hardihood, that he had not a word to say in order to aid me. When I had finished, M. d'Orleans thanked me in a piteous tone, by which I knew the profound impression I had made upon his mind. I proposed, while he was still shaken, that he should at once send to Madame de Maintenon, to know when she would grant him an audience; for he had determined to speak to her first of his intention to give up Madame d'Argenton. Besons seconded me; and while we were talking together, not daring to push our point further, M. d'Orleans much astonished us by rising, running with impetuosity to the door, and calling aloud for his servants. One ran to him, whom he ordered in a whisper to go to Madame de Maintenon, to ask at what hour she would see him on the morrow. He returned immediately, and threw himself into a chair like a man whose strength fails him, and who is at his last gasp. Uncertain as to what he had just

done, I asked him if he had sent to Madame de Maintenon. "Yes, Monsieur," said he, in a tone of despair. Instantly I started towards him, and thanked him with all the contentment and all the joy imaginable. This terrible interview, for the struggle we had all gone through was very great, was soon after brought to a close, and Besons and myself went our way, congratulating each other on the success of this day's labour.

On the next day, Friday, the 3rd of January, I saw M. d'Orleans as he preceded the King to mass, and in my impatience I approached him, and speaking in a low tone, asked him if he had seen "that woman." I did not dare to mention names just then. He replied "yes," but in so lackadaisical a tone that I feared he had seen her to effect, and I asked him if he had spoken to her. Upon receiving another "yes" like the other, my emotion redoubled. "But have you told her all?" I said. "Yes," he replied, "I have told her all." "And are you content?" said I. "Nobody could be more so," he replied; "I was nearly an hour with her, she was very much surprised and ravished."

I saw M. d'Orleans under better circumstances at another period of the day, and then I learnt from him that since meeting me he had spoken to the King also, and told him all. "Ah, Monsieur," cried I, with transport, "how I love you!" and advancing warmly towards him, I added, "How glad I am to see you at last delivered; how did you bring this to pass?" "I mistrusted myself so much," replied he, "and was so

violently agitated after speaking to Madame de Maintenon, that I feared to run the risk of pausing all the morning; so, immediately after mass I spoke to the King, and"—here, overcome by his grief, his voice faltered, and he burst into sighs, into tears, and into sobs. I retired into a corner. A moment after Besons entered: the spectacle and the profound silence astonished him. He lowered his eyes, and advanced but little. At last we gently approached each other. I told him that M. d'Orleans had conquered himself, and had spoken to the King. The Maréchal was so bewildered with surprise and joy that he remained for some moments speechless and motionless: then, running towards M. d'Orleans, he thanked him, felicitated him, and wept for very joy. M. d'Orleans was cruelly agitated, now maintaining a ferocious silence, and now bursting into a torrent of sighs, sobs, and tears. He said at last that Madame de Maintenon had been extremely surprised with the resolution he had taken, and at the same time delighted. She assured him that it would put him on better terms than ever with the King, and that Madame d'Argenton should be treated with every consideration. I pressed M. d'Orleans to let us know how the King had received him. He replied that the King had appeared very much surprised, but had spoken coldly. I comforted him for this disappointment by assuring him that the King's coldness arose only from his astonishment, and that in the end all would be well.

It would be impossible to describe the joy felt by Besons and myself at seeing our labours brought to

this satisfactory point. I knew I should make many enemies when the part I had taken in influencing M. d'Orleans to give up Madame d'Argenton came to be known, as it necessarily would; but I felt I had done rightly, and left the consequences to Providence. Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans showed me the utmost gratitude for what I had done. She exhibited, too, so much intelligence, good sense, and ability, in the conversation I had with her, that I determined to spare no pains to unite her husband to her more closely; being firmly persuaded that he would nowhere find a better counseller than in her. The surprise of the whole court, when it became known that M. d'Orleans had at last separated himself from Madame d'Argenton, was great indeed. It was only equalled by the vexation of those who were opposed to him. Of course in this matter I was not spared. For several days nothing was spoken of but this rupture, and everywhere I was pointed out as the author of it, Besons being scarcely alluded to. I parried the thrusts made at me as well as I could, as much for the purpose of leaving all the honour to M. d'Orleans, as for the purpose of avoiding the anger of those who were annoyed with me; and also from a just fear of showing that I had too much influence over the mind of a Prince not without faults, and who could not always be led.

As for Madame d'Argenton, she received the news that her reign was over with all the consternation, rage, and despair that might have been expected. Mademoiselle de Chausseraye was sent by Madame de

Maintenon to announce the ill news to her. When Mademoiselle de Chausseraye arrived at Madame d'Argenton's house, Madame d'Argenton was out: she had gone to supper with the Princesse de Rohan. Mademoiselle de Chausseraye waited until she returned, and then broke the matter to her gently, and after much preamble and circumlocution, as though she were about to announce the death of some one. The tears, the cries, the howlings of Madame d'Argenton filled the house, and announced to all the domestics that the reign of felicity was at an end there. After a long silence on the part of Mademoiselle de Chausseraye, she spoke her best in order to appease the poor lady. She represented to her the delicacy and liberality of the arrangements M. d'Orleans had made in her behalf. In the first place she was free to live in any part of the realm except Paris and its appanages. In the next place he assured to her forty-five thousand livres a year, nearly all the capital of which would belong to the son he had had by her, whom he had recognised and made legitimate, and who has since become Grandee of Spain, Grand Prieur of France, and General of the Galleys (for the best of all conditions in France is to have none at all, and to be a bastard). Lastly he undertook to pay all her debts up to the day of the rupture, so that she should not be importuned by any creditor, and allowed her to retain her jewellery, her plate, her furniture—worth altogether about four hundred thousand livres. His liberality amounted to a total of about two million livres, which I thought prodigious.

Madame d'Argenton, in despair at first, became more tractable as she learnt the provisions which had been made for her, and the delicacy with which she was treated. She remained four days in Paris, and then returned to her father's house near Port-Sainte-Maxence, the Chevalier d'Orleans, her son, remaining at the Palais Royale. The King, after his first surprise had worn away, was in the greatest joy at the rupture; and testified his gratification to M. d'Orleans, whom he treated better and better every day. Madame de Maintenon did not dare not to contribute a little at first; and in this the Prince felt the friendship of the Jesuits, whom he had contrived to attach to him. The Duchesse de Bourgogne did marvels of her own accord; and the Duc de Bourgogne also, being urged by M. de Beauvilliers. Monseigneur alone remained irritated, on account of the Spanish affair.

I must here mention the death of M. le Duc. He was engaged in a trial which was just about to be pleaded. He had for some time suffered from a strange disease, a mixture of apoplexy and epilepsy, which he concealed so carefully, that he drove away one of his servants for speaking of it to his fellows. For sometime he had had a continual headache. This state troubled the gladness he felt at being delivered from his troublesome father and brother-in-law. One evening he was riding in his carriage, returning from a visit to the Hôtel de Coislin, without torches, and with only one servant behind, when he felt so ill that he drew the string, and made his lackey get up to tell him whether his mouth was not all on one

side. This was not the case, but he soon lost speech and consciousness after having requested to be taken in privately to the Hôtel de Condé. They there put him in bed. Priests and doctors came. But he only made horrible faces, and died about four o'clock in the morning.

Madame la Duchesse did not lose her presence of mind, and, whilst her husband was dying, took steps to secure her future fortune. Meanwhile she managed to cry a little, but nobody believed in her grief. As for M. le Duc, I have already mentioned some anecdotes of him that exhibit his cruel character. He was a marvellously little man, short, without being fat. A dwarf of Madame la Princesse was said to be the cause. He was of a livid yellow, nearly always looked furious, and was ever so proud, so audacious, that it was difficult to get used to him. His cruelty and ferocity were so extreme that people avoided him, and his pretended friends would not invite him to join in any merriment. They avoided him : he ran after them to escape from solitude, and would sometimes burst upon them during their jovial repasts, reproach them with turning a cold shoulder to him, and change their merriment to desolation.

After the death of M. le Duc, a grand discussion on precedence at the After-Suppers, set on foot by the proud Duchesse d'Orleans, was, after an elaborate examination by the King, brought to a close. The King ordered his determination to be kept secret until he formally declared it. It is necessary to set forth in a few words the mechanism of the After-Suppers every

day. The King, on leaving table, stopped less than a half-quarter of an hour with his back leaning against the balustrade of his chamber. He there found in a circle all the ladies who had been at his supper, and who came there to wait for him a little before he left table, except the ladies who sat, who came out after him, and who, in the suite of the Princes and Princesses who had supped with him, advanced one by one and made him a courtesy, and filled up the remainder of the standing circle; for a space was always left for them by the other ladies. The men stood behind. The King amused himself by observing the dresses, the countenances, and the gracefulness of the ladies' courtesies, said a word to the Princes and Princesses who had supped with him, and who closed the circle near him on either hand, then bowed to the ladies on right and left, bowed once or twice more as he went away, with a grace and majesty unparalleled, spoke sometimes, but very rarely, to some lady in passing, entered the first cabinet, where he gave the order, and then advanced to the second cabinet, the doors from the first to the second always remaining open. There he placed himself in a fauteuil, Monsieur, while he was there, in another; the Duchesse de Bourgogne, Madame (but only after the death of Monsieur), the Duchesse de Berry (after her marriage), the three bastard-daughters, and Madame du Maine (when she was at Versailles), on stools on each side. Monseigneur, the Duc de Bourgogne, the Duc de Berry, the Duc d'Orleans, the two bastards, M. le Duc (as the husband of Madame la Duchesse), and afterwards the two sons

of M. du Maine, when they had grown a little, and d'Antin, came afterwards, all standing. It was the object of the Duchesse d'Orleans to change this order, and make her daughters take precedence of the wives of the Princes of the Blood; but the King declared against her. When he made the public announcement of his decision, the Duc d'Orleans took the opportunity of alluding to a marriage which would console him for everything. "I should think so," replied the King, drily, and with a bitter and mocking smile.

CHAPTER. XXIII.

Proposed Marriage of Mademoiselle—My Intrigues to bring it about—The Duchesse de Bourgogne and other Allies—The Attack begun—Progress of the Intrigue—Economy at Marly—The Marriage agreed upon—Scene at St. Cloud—Horrible Reports—The Marriage—Madame de Saint Simon—Strange Character of the Duchesse de Berry.

It was the desire of the Duc and Duchesse d'Orleans to marry Mademoiselle (their daughter) to the Duc de Berry (third son of Monseigneur, and consequently brother of the Duc de Bourgogne and of the King of Spain). There were many obstacles in the way—partly the state of public affairs—partly the fact that the King, though seemingly, was not really quite reconciled—partly the recollection of that cruel *bon mot* in Spain—partly the fact that Monseigneur would naturally object to marry his favourite son with the daughter of a man towards whom he always testified hatred in the most indecent manner. The recent union between Madame de Maintenon, Mademoiselle Choin, and Monseigneur was also a great obstacle. In fact after what M. le Duc d'Orleans had been accused of in Spain, with his abilities and talents it seemed dangerous to make him the father-in-law of M. le Duc de Berry.

For my part I passionately desired the marriage of Mademoiselle, although I saw that all tended to the marriage of Mademoiselle de Bourbon, daughter of

Madame le Duchesse, in her place. I had many reasons, private and public, for acting against the latter marriage; but it was clear that unless very vigorous steps were taken it would fall like a millstone upon my head, crush me, and wound the persons to whom I was attached. M. le Duc d'Orleans and Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, were immersed in the deepest indolence. They desired, but did not act. I went to them and explained the state of the case—pointed out the danger of Madame la Duchesse—excited their pride, their jealousy, their spite. Will it be believed that it was necessary to put all this machinery in motion? At last, by working on them by the most powerful motives, I made them attend to their own interests. The natural but extreme laziness of the Duchesse d'Orleans gave way this time, but less to ambition than to the desire of defeating a sister who was so inimical to her. We next concerted how we should make use of M. d'Orleans himself.

That Prince, with all his wit and his passion for Mademoiselle—which had never weakened since her birth—was like a motionless beam, which stirred only in obedience to our redoubled efforts, and who remained so to the conclusion of this great business. I often reflected on the causes of this incredible conduct; and was led to suppose that the knowledge of the irremediable nature of what had taken place in Spain was the rein that restrained him. However this may have been, I was throughout obliged to use main force to bring him to activity. I determined to form and direct a powerful Cabal in order to bring my views to

pass. The first person of whom it was necessary to make sure was the Duchesse de Bourgogne. That Princesse had many reasons for the preference of Mademoiselle over Mademoiselle de Bourbon (daughter of Madame la Duchesse). She knew the King perfectly; and could not be ignorant of the power of novelty over his mind, of which power she had herself made a happy experiment. What she had to fear was another herself—I mean a Princesse on the same terms with the King as she was, who, being younger than she, would amuse him by new childish playfulness no longer suited to her age, and yet which she (the Duchesse) was still obliged to employ. The very contrast of her own untimely childishness, with a childishness so much more natural, would injure her. The new favourite would moreover not have a husband to support; for the Duc de Berry was already well-liked. The Duc de Bourgogne, on the contrary, since the affair of Flanders, had fallen into disgrace with his father, Monseigneur; and his scruples, his preciseness, his retired life, devoted to literal compliance with the rules of devotion, contrasted unfavourably with the free life of his younger brother.

The present and the future—whatever was important in life—were therefore at stake with Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne; and yet her great duty to herself was perpetually in danger of being stifled by the fictitious and petty duties of daily life. It was necessary to stimulate her. She felt these things in general; and that it was necessary that her sister-in-law should be a Princesse, neither able nor willing to

give her umbrage, and over whom she should be mistress. But in spite of her wit and sense, she was not capable of feeling in a sufficiently lively manner of herself all the importance of these things, amidst the effervescence of her youth, the occupation of her successive duties, the private and general favour she seemed to enjoy, the greatness of a rank in expectation of a throne, the round of amusements which dissipated her mind and her days : gentle, light, easy—perhaps too easy. I felt, however, that from the effect of these considerations upon her I should derive the greatest assistance, on account of the influence she could exert upon the King, and still more on Madame de Maintenon, both of whom loved her exceedingly ; and I felt all that the Duchesse d'Orleans would have neither the grace nor the fire necessary to stick it in deep enough—on account of her great interest in the matter.

I influenced the Duchesse de Villeroy and Madame de Lévi, who could work on the Duchesse, and also Madame d'O ; obtained the indirect assistance of M. du Maine—and by representing to the Ducs de Chevreuse, and de Beauvilliers, that if M. de Berry married Mademoiselle de Bourbon, hatred would arise between him and his brother, and great danger to the state, enlisted them also on my side. I knew that the Duc de Berry was a fort that could only be carried by mine and assault. Working still further, I obtained the concurrence of the Jesuits ; and made the Père du Trevoux our partisan. Nothing is indifferent to the Jesuits. They became a powerful instrument. As a last ally I obtained the

co-operation of the Maréchal de Boufflers. Such were the machines that my friendship for those to whom I was attached, my hatred for Madame la Duchesse, my care of my present and future situation, enabled me to discover, to set going, with an exact and compassed movement, a precise agreement, and the strength of a lever—which the space of one Lent commenced and perfected—all whose movements, embarrasments, and progress in their divers lines I knew; and which I regularly wound up in reciprocal cadence every day!

Towards the end of the Lent, the Duchesse de Bourgogne, having sounded the King and Madame de Maintenon, had found the latter well disposed, and the former without any particular objection. One day that Mademoiselle had been taken to see the King at the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, where Monseigneur happened to be, the Duchesse de Bourgogne praised her, and when she had gone away, ventured, with that freedom and that predetermined impulsiveness and gaiety which she sometimes made use of, to say: "What an excellent wife for M. le Duc de Berry!" This expression made Monseigneur redden with anger, and exclaim, "that would be an excellent method of recompensing the Duc d'Orleans for his conduct in Spain!" When he had said these words he hastily left the company, all very much astonished; for no one expected a person seemingly so indifferent and so measured to come out so strongly. The Duchesse de Bourgogne, who had only spoken so to feel the way with Monseigneur in presence of the King, was bold and clever to the end. Turning with a bewildered look towards Madame de

Maintenon, "My Aunt," quoth she to her, "have I said something foolish?" The King, piqued, answered for Madame de Maintenon, and said, warmly, that if Madame la Duchesse was working upon Monseigneur she would have to deal with *him*. Madame de Maintenon adroitly envenomed the matter by wondering at a vivacity so uncommon with Monseigneur, and said, that if Madame la Duchesse had that much of influence, she would soon make him do other things of more consequence. The conversation, interrupted in various ways and renewed, advanced with emotion, and in the midst of reflections that did more injury to Mademoiselle de Bourbon than the friendship of Monseigneur for Madame la Duchesse could serve her.

When I learned this adventure, I saw that it was necessary to attack Monseigneur by piquing the King against Madame la Duchesse, and making him fear the influence of that Princesse on Monseigneur and through Monseigneur on himself; that no opportunity should be lost to impress on the King the fear of being governed and kept in pupilage by his children; that it was equally important to frighten Madame de Maintenon, and show her the danger she was in from the influence of Monseigneur. I worked on the fears of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, by Madame de Villeroy and de Lévi; on the Duc de Bourgogne, by M. de Beauvilliers; on Madame de Maintenon, by the Maréchal de Boufflers; on the King himself, by the Père Tellier; and all these batteries succeeded.

In order not to hurry matters too much, I took a turn to La Ferté, and then came back to Marly just as

the King arrived. Here I had a little alarm, which did not, however, discourage me. I learned, in fact, that one day the Duchesse de Bourgogne, urged perhaps rather too much on the subject of Mademoiselle by Madame d'O, and somewhat annoyed, had shown an inclination for a foreign marriage. Would to God that such a marriage could have been brought about! I should always have preferred it, but there were many reasons to render it impossible.

On my arrival at Marly, I found everything in trouble there: the King so chagrined that he could not hide it—although usually a master of himself and of his face: the Court believing that some new disaster had happened which would unwillingly be declared. Four or five days passed in this way: at last it became known what was in the wind. The King, informed that Paris and all the public were murmuring loudly about the expenses of Marly—at a time when it was impossible to meet the most indispensable claims of a necessary and unfortunate war—was more annoyed this time than on any other occasion, although he had often received the same warnings. Madame de Maintenon had the greatest difficulty to hinder him from returning straight to Versailles. The upshot was, that the King declared with a sort of bitter joy, that he would no longer feed the ladies at Marly; that for the future he would dine alone, simply, as at Versailles; that he would sup every day at a table for sixteen with his family, and that the spare places should be occupied by ladies invited in the morning; that the Princesses of his family should each have a table for the ladies they

brought with them; and that Madames Voysin and Desmarets should each have one for the ladies who did not choose to eat in their own rooms. He added bitterly, that by making retrenchments at Marly he should not spend more there than at Versailles, so that he could go there when he pleased without being exposed to the blame of any one. He deceived himself from one end of this business to the other, but nobody but himself was deceived, if indeed *he* was in any other way but in expecting to deceive the world. The truth is, that no change was made at Marly, except in name. The same expenses went on. The enemies insultingly ridiculed these retrenchments. The King's subjects did not cease to complain.

About this time an invitation to Marly having been obtained by Madame la Duchesse for her daughters, Mademoiselles de Bourbon and de Charolois, the King offered one to Mademoiselle. This offer was discussed before the Duc and Duchesse d'Orleans and me. We at last resolved to leave Mademoiselle at Versailles; and not to be troubled by seeing Mademoiselle de Bourbon passing her days in the same salon, often at the same play-table with the Duc de Berry, making herself admired by the Court, fluttering round Monseigneur, and accustoming the eye of the King to her. We knew that these trifles would not bring about a marriage; and it was still more important not to give up Mademoiselle to the malignity of the Court, to exposure, and complaints, from which it might not always be possible to protect her.

But I had felt that it was necessary to act vigorously,

and pressed the Duc d'Orleans to speak to the King. To my surprise he suddenly heaped up objections, derived from the public disasters with which a princely marriage would contrast disagreeably. The Duchesse d'Orleans was strangely staggered by this admission; it only angered me. I answered by repeating all my arguments. At last he gave way, and agreed to write to the King. Here, again, I had many difficulties to overcome, and was obliged, in fact, to write the letter myself, and dictate it to him. He made one or two changes; and at last signed and sealed it. But I had the greatest difficulty yet in inciting him to give it to the King. I had to follow him, to urge him, to pique him, almost to push him into the presence. The King received the letter very graciously; it had its effect; and the marriage was resolved on.

When the preliminaries were settled, the Duc and Duchesse d'Orleans began to show their desire that Madame de Saint Simon should be lady of honour to their daughter when she had become the Duchesse de Berry. I was far from flattered by this distinction, and refused as best I might. Madame de Saint Simon went to have an audience of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and asked not to be appointed; but her objections were not listened to, or listened to with astonishment. Meanwhile I endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation of the Duc d'Orleans with La Choin; but utterly failed. La Choin positively refused to have anything to do with the Duc and Duchesse. I was much embarrassed to communicate this news to them, to whom I was attached. It was

necessary, however, to do so. I hastened to Saint Cloud, and found the Duc and Duchesse d'Orleans at table with Mademoiselle and some ladies in a most delightful menagery, adjoining the railing of the avenue near the village, with a charming pleasure-garden attached to it. All this belonged, under the name of Mademoiselle, to Madame de Maré her governess. I sat down and chatted with them; but the impatience of the Duc d'Orleans to learn the news could not be checked. He asked me if I was very satisfied. "Middling," I replied, not to spoil his dinner; but he rose at once and took me into the garden. He was much affected to hear of the ill-success of my negotiation; and returned downcast to table. I took the first opportunity to blame his impatience, and the facility with which he allowed the impressions he received to appear. Always in extreme, he said he cared not; and talked wild of planting cabbages—talk in which he indulged often without meaning anything.

Soon after M. le Duc d'Orleans went aside with Mademoiselle; and I found myself placed accidentally near Madame de Fontaine-Martel. She was a great friend of mine, and much attached to M. d'Orleans; and it was by her means that I had become friendly with the Duc. She felt at once that something was going on; and did not doubt that the marriage of Mademoiselle was on the carpet. She said so, but I did not answer, yet without assuming an air of reserve that would have convinced her. Taking her text from the presence of M. le Duc d'Orleans with Mademoiselle, she said to me confidentially, that

it would be well to hasten this marriage if it was possible, because all sorts of horrible things were invented to prevent it; and without waiting to be too much pressed, she told me that the most abominable stories were in circulation as to the friendship of father and daughter. The hair of my head stood on-end. I now felt more heavily than ever with what demons we had to do; and how necessary it was to hurry on matters. For this reason, after we had walked about a good deal after dark, I again spoke with M. d'Orleans, and told him, that if, before the end of this voyage to Marly, he did not carry the declaration of his daughter's marriage, it would never take place.

I persuaded him; and left him more animated and encouraged than I had seen him. He amused himself I know not in what other part of the house. I then talked a little with Madame de Maré, my relation and friend, until I was told that Madame de Fontaine-Martel wished to speak to me in the château. When I went there I was taken to the cabinet of the Duchesse d'Orleans, when I learnt that she had just been made acquainted with the abominable reports spread against her husband and daughter. We deplored together the misfortune of having to do with such furies. The Duchesse protested that there was not even any seeming in favour of these calumnies. The Duc had ever tenderly loved his daughter from the age of two years, when he was nearly driven to despair by a serious illness she had, during which he watched her night and day; and this tenderness had gone on increasing day by day, so that he loved her more than his son.

We agreed that it would be cruel, wicked, and dangerous to tell M. d'Orleans what was said.

At length the decisive blow was struck. The King had an interview with Monseigneur; and told him he had determined on the marriage, begging him to make up his mind as soon as possible. The declaration was soon made. What must have been the state of Madame la Duchesse! I never knew what took place in her house at this strange moment; and would have dearly paid for a hiding-place behind the tapestry. As for Monseigneur, as soon as his original repugnance was overcome, and he saw that it was necessary to comply, he behaved very well. He received the Duc and Duchesse d'Orleans very well, and kissed her and drank their health and that of all the family cheerfully. They were extremely delighted and surprised.

My next visit to Saint Cloud was very different from that in which I reported the failure of my endeavours with Mademoiselle Choin. I was received in triumph before a large company. To my surprise, Mademoiselle, as soon as I appeared, ran towards me, kissed me on both cheeks, took me by the hand, and led me into the orangery. Then she thanked me, and admitted that her father had constantly kept her acquainted with all the negotiations as they went on. I could not help blaming his easiness and imprudence. She mingled all with testimonies of the most lively joy; and I was surprised by her grace, her eloquence, the dignity and the propriety of the terms she used. I learned an immense number of things in this half-hour's conversation. Afterwards Mademoiselle took the

opportunity to say and do all manner of graceful things to Madame de Saint Simon.

The Duchesse d'Orleans now returned once more to the charge, in order to persuade my wife to be dame d'honneur to her daughter. I refused as firmly as I could. But soon after the King himself named Madame de Saint Simon; and when the Duchesse de Bourgogne suggested a doubt of her acceptance, exclaimed, almost piqued: "Refuse! O no! not when she learns that it is my desire." In fact, I soon received so many menacing warnings that I was obliged to give in; and Madame de Saint Simon received the appointment. This was made publicly known by the King, who up to that very morning remained doubtful whether he would be met by a refusal or not; and who, as he was about to speak, looked at me with a smile that was meant to please and warn me to be silent. Madame de Saint Simon learned the news with tears. She was excellently well received by the King, and complimented agreeably by Madame de Maintenon.

The marriage took place with the usual ceremonies. The Duc de Beauvilliers and Madame de Saint Simon drew the curtains of the couple when they went to bed; and laughed together at being thus employed. The King who had given a very mediocre present of diamonds to the new Duchesse de Berry, gave nothing to the Duc de Berry. The latter had so little money that he could not play during the first days of the voyage to Marly. The Duchesse de Bourgogne told this to the King, who feeling the state in which he himself was, said that he had only five hundred pistoles to give him. He gave

them with an excuse on the misfortunes of the time, because the Duchesse de Bourgogne thought with reason that a little was better than nothing, and that it was insufferable not to be able to play.

Madame de Maré was now set at liberty. The place of Dame d'Atours was offered to her; but she advanced many reasons for not accepting it, and on being pressed, refused with an obstinacy that surprised everyone. We were not long in finding out the cause of her obstinate unwillingness to remain with Madame la Duchesse de Berry. The more that Princesse allowed people to see what she was—and she never concealed herself—the more we saw that Madame de Maré was in the right; and the more we admired the miracle of care and prudence which had prevented anything from coming to light; and the more we felt how blindly people act in what they desire with the most eagerness and achieve with much trouble and much joy; and the more we deplored having succeeded in an affair which, so far from having undertaken and carried out as I did, I should have traversed with still greater zeal, even if Mademoiselle de Bourbon had profited thereby without knowing it, if I had known half a quarter—what do I say? the thousandth part—of what we unhappily witnessed! I shall say no more for the present; and as I go on, I shall only say what cannot be concealed; and I say thus much so soon merely because the strange things that soon happened began to develope themselves a little during this first voyage to Marly.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Birth of Louis XV.—The Maréchale de la Meilleraye—Saint Ruth's Cudgel —The Cardinal de Bouillon's desertion from France—Anedotes of his Audacity.

On Saturday, the 15th of February, the King was waked up at seven o'clock in the morning, an hour earlier than usual, because Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne was in the pains of labour. He dressed himself diligently in order to go to her. She did not keep him waiting long. At three minutes and three seconds after eight o'clock, she brought into the world a Duc d'Anjou, who is the King Louis XV., at present reigning, which caused a great joy. This Prince was soon after sprinkled by Cardinal de Janson in the chamber where he was born, and then carried upon the knees of the Duchesse de Ventadour in the sedan chair of the King into the King's apartments, accompanied by the Maréchal de Boufflers and by the body-guards with officers. A little while after La Vrillière carried to him the *cordon bleu*, and all the Court went to see him, two things which much displeased his brother, who did not scruple to show it. Madame de Saint Simon, who was in the chamber of Madame la Dauphine, was by chance one of the first

who saw this new-born Prince. The accouchement passed over very well.

About this time died the Maréchale de la Meilleraye, aged eighty-eight years. She was the paternal aunt of the Maréchal de Villeroy and the Duc de Brissac his brother-in-law. It was she who unwittingly put that cap on MM. de Brissac, which they have ever since worn in their arms, and which has been imitated. She was walking in a picture gallery of her ancestors one day with her niece, a lively, merry person, whom she obliged to salute, and be polite to each portrait, and who in pleasant revenge persuaded her that one of the said portraits wore a cap, which proved him to be an Italian Prince. She swallowed this, and had the cap introduced into her arms despite her family, who are now obliged to keep it, but who always call it, "My Aunt's cap." On another occasion, people were speaking in her presence of the death of the Chevalier de Savoie, brother of the Comte de Soissons, and of the famous Prince Eugène, who died very young, very suddenly, very debauched, and full of benefices. The talk became religious. She listened some time; and then with a profound look of conviction, said: "For my part, I am persuaded that God will think twice about damning a man of such high birth as that!" This caused a burst of laughter, but nothing could make her change her opinion. Her vanity was cruelly punished. She used to affect to apologise for having married the Maréchal de la Meilleraye. After his death, being in love with Saint Ruth, her page, she married him; but took care not to disclose her marriage

for fear of losing her distinction at Court. Saint Ruth was a very honourable gentleman, very poor, tall, and well made, whom everybody knew; extremely ugly—I don't know whether he became so after his marriage. He was a worthy man and a good soldier. But he was also a rough customer, and when his distinguished wife annoyed him he twirled his cudgel and belaboured her soundly. This went so far that the Maréchale, not being able to stand it any longer, demanded an audience of the King, admitted her weakness and her shame, and implored his protection. The King kindly promised to set matters to rights. He soundly rated Saint Ruth in his cabinet, and forbade him to ill-treat the Maréchale. But what is bred in the bone will never get out of the flesh. The Maréchale came to make fresh complaints, The King grew angry in earnest, and threatened St. Ruth. This kept him quiet for some time. But the habit of the stick was too powerful; and he flourished it again. The Maréchale flew as usual to the King, who seeing that Saint Ruth was incorrigible, was good enough to send him to Guyenne under pretence of employment. Afterwards he was sent to Ireland, where he was killed.

The Maréchale de la Meilleraye had been perfectly beautiful, and was full of wit. She so turned the head of the Cardinal de Retz, that he wanted to turn everything topsy-turvy in France, in order to make himself a necessary man and force the King to use his influence at Rome in order to obtain a dispensation by which he (the Cardinal) should be allowed, though a priest and a

consecrated Bishop, to marry the Maréchale de la Meilleraye while her husband was alive and she on very good terms with him! This madness is inconceivable and yet existed.

I have described in its place, the disgrace of Cardinal de Bouillon, and the banishment to which he was sentenced. Exile did not improve him. He languished in weariness and rage, and saw no hope that his position would ever change. Incapable of repose, he had passed all his long enforced leisure in a monastic war. The monks of Cluni were his antagonists. He was constantly bringing actions against them, which they as constantly defended. He accused them of revolt—they accused him of scheming. They profited by his disgrace, and omitted nothing to shake off the yoke, which when in favour, he had imposed upon them. These broils went on, until at last a suit, which Cardinal de Bouillon had commenced against the refractory monks, and which had been carried into the grand Council of Paris, was decided against him, notwithstanding all the efforts he made to obtain a contrary verdict. This was the last drop which made the too full cup overflow, and which consummated the resolution that Cardinal had long since had in his head, and which he now executed.

By the terms of his exile, he was allowed to visit, without restraint, his various abbeys, situated in different parts of the realm. He took advantage of this privilege, gave out that he was going to Normandy, but instead of doing so, posted away to Picardy, stopped briefly at Abbeville, gained Arras, where he had the

Abbey of Saint Waast, thence feigning to go and see his abbey of Vigogne, he passed over into the camp of the enemy, and threw himself into the arms of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugène. The Prince d'Auvergne, his nephew, had deserted from France in a similar manner some time before, as I have related in its place, and was in waiting to receive the Cardinal, who was, also, very graciously welcomed by Prince Eugène and the Duke of Marlborough, who introduced him to the heads of the army, and lavished upon him the greatest honours.

Such a change of condition appeared very sweet to this spirit so haughty and so ulcerated, and marvellously inflated the Cardinal's courage. He recompensed his dear hosts by discourses, which were the most agreeable to them, upon the misery of France (which his frequent journeys through the provinces had placed before his eyes), upon its powerlessness to sustain the war; upon the discontent which reigned among the people; upon the exhaustion of the finances; in fine, he spared nothing that perfidy or ingratitude could suggest to flatter them and gain their favour.

No sooner had the Cardinal had time to turn round among his new friends then he wrote a letter to the King announcing his flight—a letter which was such a monstrous production of insolence, of madness, of felony, and which was written in a style so extravagant and confused that it deserves to be thus specially alluded to. In this letter, as full of absurdities, impudence, and of madness, as of words, the Cardinal, while pretending much devotion for the King, and

much submission to the Church, plainly intimated that he cared for neither. Although this was as the sting of a gnat upon an elephant, the King was horribly piqued at it. He received the letter on the 24th of May, gave it the next day to d'Aguesseau, attorney-general, and ordered him to commence a suit against Cardinal de Bouillon, as guilty of felony. At the same time the King wrote to Rome, enclosing a copy of Bouillon's letter, so that it might be laid before the Pope. This letter received little approbation. People considered that the King had forgotten his dignity in writing it, it seemed so much like a justification and so little worthy of a great monarch. As for the Cardinal de Bouillon, he grew more haughty than ever. He wrote a letter upon the subject of this trial with which he was threatened, even more violent than his previous letter, and proclaimed that cardinals were not in any way amenable to secular justice, and could not be judged except by the Pope, and all the sacred college.

So in fact it seemed to be; for although the Parliament commenced the trial, and issued an order of arrest against the Cardinal, they soon found themselves stopped by difficulties which arose, and by this immunity of the cardinals, which was supported by many examples. After all the fuss made, therefore, this cause fell by its own weakness, and exhaled itself, so to speak, in insensible perspiration. A fine lesson this for the most powerful princes, and calculated to teach them that if they want to be served by Rome they should favour those that are there, instead of raising

their own subjects, who, out of Rome, can be of no service to the State, and who are good only to seize three or four hundred thousand livres a year in benefices, with the quarter of which an Italian would be more than recompensed. A French cardinal in France is the friend of the Pope, but the enemy of the King, the Church, and the State; a tyrant very often to the clergy and the ministers, at liberty to do what he likes without ever being punished for anything.

As nothing could be done in this way against the Cardinal, other steps were taken. The fraudulent "Genealogical History of the House of Auvergne," which I have previously alluded to, was suppressed by royal edict, and orders given that all the copies of it should be seized. Baluze, who had written it, was deprived of his chair of Professor of the Royal College, and driven out of the realm. A large quantity of copies of this edict were printed and publicly distributed. The little patrimony that Cardinal de Bouillon had not been able to carry away, was immediately confiscated: the temporality of his benefices had been already seized, and on the 7th of July appeared a declaration from the King, which, depriving the Cardinal of all his advowsons, distributed them to the bishops of the dioceses in which those advowsons were situated.

These blows were very sensibly felt by the other Bouillons, but it was no time for complaint. The Cardinal himself became more enraged than ever. Even up to this time he had kept so little within bounds that he had pontifically officiated in the church of Tournai at the *Te Deum* for the taking of Douai (by the

enemies); and from that town (Tournai), where he had fixed his residence, he wrote a long letter to M. de Beauvais, bishop of the place, when it yielded, and who would not sing the *Te Deum*, exhorting him to return to Tournai and submit to the new rule. Some time after this, that is to say towards the end of the year, he was guilty of even greater presumption. The Abbey of Saint Arnaud in Flanders, had just been given by the King to Cardinal La Tremoille, who had been confirmed in his possession by bulls from the Pope. Since then the abbey had fallen into the power of the enemy. Upon this, Cardinal de Bouillon caused himself to be elected Abbot by a minority of the monks and in spite of the opposition of the others. It was curious to see this dutiful son of Rome, who had declared in his letter to the King, that he thought of nothing except the the dignity of the King, and how he could best serve God and the church, thus elect himself in spite of the bulls of the Pope, in spite of the orders of the King, and enjoy by force the revenues of the abbey, protected solely by heretics!

But I have in the above recital alluded to the taking of Douai: this reminds me that I have got to speak of our military movements, our losses, and our victories, of this year. In Flanders and in Spain they were of some importance, and had better perhaps have a chapter or more to themselves.

CHAPTER XXV.

Imprudence of Villars—The Danger of Truthfulness—Military Mistakes—The Fortunes of Berwick—The Son of James—Berwick's Report on the Army—Imprudent saying of Villars—"The Good Little Fellow" in a Scrape—What happens to him.

The King, who had made numberless promotions, appointed this year the same generals to the same armies. Villars was chosen for Flanders, as before. Having arrived at the very summit of favour, he thought he might venture, for the first time in his life, to bring a few truths before the King. He did nothing then but represent to the ministers, nay, even to the King, and Madame de Maintenon themselves, the wretched state of our magazines and our garrisons; the utter absence of all provision for the campaign, and the piteous condition of the troops and their officers, without money and without pay. This was new language in the mouth of Villars, who hitherto had owed all his success to the smiling, rose-tinted account he had given of everything. It was the frequency and the hardihood of his falsehoods in this respect that made the King and Madame de Maintenon look upon him as their sole resource; for he never said anything disagreeable, and never found difficulties anywhere. Now that he had raised this fatal curtain, the aspect appeared so hideous to

them, that they found it easier to fly into a rage than to reply. From that moment they began to regard Villars with other eyes. Finding that he spoke now the language which everybody spoke, they began to look upon him as the world had always looked upon him,—to find him ridiculous, silly, impudent, lying, insupportable; to reproach themselves with having elevated him from nothing, so rapidly and so enormously; they began to shun him, to put him aside, to make him perceive what they thought, and to let others perceive it also.

Villars in his turn was affrighted. He saw the prospect of losing what he had gained, and of sinking into hopeless disgrace. With the effrontery that was natural to him, he returned therefore to his usual flatteries, artifices, and deceits; laughed at all dangers and inconveniences, as having resources in himself against everything! The coarseness of this variation was as plain as possible; but the difficulty of choosing another general was equally plain, and Villars thus got out of the quagmire. He set forth for the frontier, therefore, in his coach, and travelling easy stages, on account of his wound, arrived in due time at the army.

Neither Prince Eugène nor the Duke of Marlborough wished for peace; their object was, the first, from personal vengeance against the King, and a desire to obtain a still greater reputation; the second, to get rich, for ambition was the prominent passion of one, and avarice of the other—their object was, I say, to enter France, and profiting by the extreme weakness and straitened state of our troops and of our places, to push their conquests as far as possible.

As for the King, stung by his continual losses, he wished passionately for nothing so much as a victory, which should disturb the plans of the enemies, and deliver him from the necessity of continuing the sad and shameful negociations for peace he had set on foot at Gertruydemberg. But the enemies were well posted, and Villars had imprudently lost a good opportunity of engaging them. All the army had noticed this fault; he had been warned in time by several general officers, and by the Maréchal de Montesquiou, but he would not believe them. He did not dare to attack the enemies, now, after having left them leisure to make all their dispositions. The army cried aloud against so capital a fault. Villars answered with his usual affrontery. He had quarrelled with his second in command, the Maréchal de Montesquiou, and now knew not what to do.

In this crisis, no engagement taking place, the King thought it fitting to send Berwick into Flanders to act as mediator, even, to some extent, as dictator to the army. He was ordered to bring back an account of all things, so that it might be seen whether a battle could or could not be fought.

I think I have already stated who Berwick was; but I will here add a few more words about him to signalise his prodigious and rapid advancement.

We were in the golden age of bastards, and Berwick was a man who had reason to think so. Bastard of James II., of England, he had arrived in France, at the age of eighteen, with that monarch, after the Revolution of 1688. At twenty-two he was made

lieutenant-general, and served as such in Flanders, without having passed through any other rank. At thirty-three he commanded in chief in Spain with a patent of general. At thirty-four he was made, on account of his victory at Almanza, grandee of Spain, and chevalier of the Golden Fleece. He continued to command in chief until February, 1706, when he was made Maréchal of France, being then not more than thirty-six years old. He was an English Duke, and although as such he had no rank in France, the King had awarded it to him, as to all who came over with James. This was making a rapid fortune with a vengeance, under a King who regarded people of thirty odd as children, but who thought no more of the ages of bastards than of those of the gods.

For more than a year past Berwick had coveted to be made Duke and Peer. But he could not obtain his wish. Now, however, that he was to be sent into Flanders for the purpose I have just described, it seemed a good opportunity to try again. He did try, and was successful. He was made Duke and Peer. He had been twice married. By his first wife he had had a son. By his second several sons and daughters. Will it believed that he was hardy enough to propose, and that we were weak enough to accord to him, that his son of the first bed should be formally excluded from the letters-patent of Duke and Peer, and that those of the second bed should alone be entered there? Yet so it was. Berwick was, in respect to England, like the Jews who await for the Messiah. He coaxed himself always with the hope of a revolution in

England, which should put the Stuarts on the throne again, and reinstate him in his wealth and honours. He was son of the sister of the Duke of Marlborough, by which general he was much loved, and with whom, by permission of the King, and of King James, he kept up a secret intercourse, of which all three were the dupes, but which enabled Berwick to maintain other intercourses in England, and to establish his batteries there, hoping thus for his reinstatement even under the government established. This explains his motive for the arrangement he made in the letters-patent. He wished his eldest son to succeed to his English dukedom and his English estates; to make the second Duke and Peer of France, and the third Grandee of Spain. Three sons hereditarily elevated to the three chief dignities of the three chief realms in Europe, it must be agreed was not bad work for a man to have achieved at fifty years of age! But Berwick failed in his English projects. Do what he could all his life to court the various ministers who came from England, he never could succeed in re-establishing himself.

The scandal was great at the complaisance of the King in consenting to a family arrangement, by which a cadet was put over the head of his elder brother; but the time of the monsters had arrived. Berwick bought an estate that he created under the name of *Fitz-James*. The King, who allowed him to do so, was shocked by the name; and, in my presence, asked Berwick the meaning of it; he, without any embarrassment, thus explained it:

The Kings of England, in legitimatising their chil-

dren, give them a name and arms, which pass to their posterity. The name varies. Thus the Duke of Richmond, bastard of Charles II., had the name of "Lennox;" the Dukes of Cleveland and of Grafton, by the same king, that of "Fitz-Roi," which means "son of the king;" in fine, the Duke of Berwick had the name of "Fitz-James;" so that his family name for his posterity is thus "Son of James;" as a name, it is so ridiculous in French, that nobody could help laughing at it, or being astonished at the scandal of imposing it in English upon France.

Berwick, having thus obtained his recompense beforehand, started off for Flanders, but not until he had seen every thing signed and sealed and delivered in due form. He found the enemy so advantageously placed, and so well prepared, that he had no difficulty in subscribing to the common opinion of the general officers, that an attack could no longer be thought of. He gathered up all the opinions he could, and then returned to Court, having been only above three weeks absent. His report dismayed the King, and those who penetrated it. Letters from the army soon showed the fault of which Villars had been guilty, and every body revolted against this wordy bully.

He soon after was the subject of common talk at the Court, and in the army, in consequence of a ridiculous adventure, in which he was the hero. His wound, or the airs that he gave himself in consequence of it, often forced him to hold his leg upon the neck of his horse, almost in the same manner as ladies do. One day, he let slip the remark that he was sick to death of

mounting on horseback like those "harlots" in the suite of Madame de Bourgogne. Those "harlots," I will observe parenthetically, were all the young ladies of the Court, and the daughters of Madame la Duchesse! Such a remark uttered by a General not much loved, speedily flew from one end of the camp to the other, and was not long in making its way to the Court and to Paris. The young horsewomen alluded to were offended; their friends took up arms for them, and Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne could not help showing irritation, or avoid complaining.

Villars was apprised of all, and was much troubled by this increase of enemies so redoubtable, of whom just then he assuredly had no need. He took it into his head to try and discover who had blabbed; and found it was Heudicourt, whom Villars, to advance his own interests, by means of Heudicourt's mother, (who was the evil genius of Madame de Maintenon), had protected; and to whom even, much against his custom, he had actually not lent, but given money.

This Heudicourt (whom I have previously alluded to, *àpropos* of a song he wrote), was a merry wag, who excelled in making fun of people, in highly-seasoned pleasantry, and in comic songs. Spoiled by the favour which had always sustained him, he gave full license to his tongue, and by this audacity had rendered himself redoubtable. He was a scurrilous wretch, a great drunkard, and a debauchee; not at all cowardly, and with a face hideous as that of an ugly satyr. He was not insensible to this; and so, unfitted for intrigues himself, he assisted others in them, and

by this honest trade, had acquired many friends amongst the flower of the courtiers of both sexes,—above all with the ladies. By way of contrast to his wickedness, he was called the "good little fellow;" and the "good little fellow" was mixed up in all intrigues; the ladies of the Court positively struggled for him; and not one of them, even of the highest ranks, would have dared to fall out with him. Thus protected, he was rather an embarrassing customer for Maréchal de Villars, who, nevertheless, falling back as usual upon his effrontery, hit upon a bright expedient to bring home to Heudicourt the expedient he had against him.

He collected together about fifteen general officers, and Heudicourt with them. When they had all arrived, he left his chamber, and went to them. A number of loiterers had gathered round. This was just what Villars wanted. He asked all the officers in turn, if they remembered hearing him utter the expression attributed to him. Albergotti said he remembered to have heard Villars apply the term "harlots" to the suttlers and the camp creatures, but never to any other woman. All the rest followed in the same track. Then Villars, after letting out against this frightful calumny, and against the impostor who had written and sent it to the Court, addressed himself to Heudicourt, whom he treated in the most cruel fashion. The "good little fellow" was strangely taken aback, and wished to defend himself; but Villars produced proofs that could not be contradicted. Thereupon the ill-favoured dog avowed his turpitude, and had the

audacity to approach Villars in order to speak low to him; but the Maréchal, drawing back and repelling him with an air of indignation, said to him aloud, that with scoundrels like him he wished for no privacy. Gathering up his pluck at this, Heudicourt gave rein to all his impudence, and declared that they who had been questioned had not dared to own the truth for fear of offending the Maréchal; that as for himself he might have been wrong in speaking and writing about it, but he had not imagined that words said before such a numerous company, and in such a public place, could remain secret, or that he had done more harm in writing about them than so many others who had acted likewise.

The Maréchal, outraged upon hearing so bold and so truthful a reply, let out with greater violence than ever against Heudicourt, accused him of ingratitude and villainy, drove him away, and a few minutes after had him arrested and conducted as a prisoner to the château at Calais. This violent scene made as much stir at the Court and in the army as that which had caused it. The consistent and public conduct of Villars was much approved. The King declared that he left Heudicourt in his hands: Madame de Maintenon and Madame de Bourgogne, that they abandoned him: and his friends avowed that his fault was inexcusable. But the tide soon turned. After the first hubbub, the excuse of the "good little fellow" appeared excellent to the ladies who had their reasons for liking him and for fearing to irritate him; and also to the army, where the Maréchal was not liked.

Several of the officers who had been publicly interrogated by Villars, now admitted that they had been taken by surprise, and had not wished to compromise themselves. It was even, going into base details, argued that the Maréchale's expression could not apply to the Vivandières and the other camp women, as they always rode astride, one leg on this side one leg on the other, like men—a manner very different from that of the ladies of Madame de Bourgogne. People contested the power of a general to deal out justice upon his inferiors for personal matters in which the service was in no wise concerned; in a word, Heudicourt was soon let out of Calais, and remained the "good little fellow" in fashion in spite of the Maréchal, who, tormented by so many things this campaign, sought for and obtained permission to go and take the waters; and did so. He was succeeded by Harcourt, who was himself in weak health. Thus one cripple replaced another. One began, the other ended, at Bourbonne.

Douai, Saint Venant, and Aire fell into the hands of the enemy during this campaign, who thus gained upon us more and more, while we did little or nothing. This was the last campaign in Flanders of the Duke of Marlborough. On the Rhine our troops observed and subsisted; nothing more: but in Spain there was more movement, and I will therefore turn my glances towards that country, and relate what took place there.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Duchesse de Berry Drunk—Operations in Spain—Vendôme demanded by Spain—His Affront by the Duchesse de Bourgogne—His Arrival—Staremberg and Stanhope—The Flag of Spain leaves Madrid—Entry of the Archduke—Enthusiasm of the Spaniards—The King Returns—Strategy of Staremberg—Affair of Brighuega—Battle of Villaviciosa—Its consequences to Vendôme and to Spain.

Before I commence speaking of the affairs of Spain, let me pass lightly over an event which, engrafted upon some others, made much noise, notwithstanding the care taken to stifle it.

Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne supped at Saint Cloud one evening with Madame la Duchesse de Berry and others—Madame de Saint Simon absenting herself from the party. Madame la Duchesse de Berry and M. d'Orleans—but she more than he—got so drunk, that Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne, and the rest of the numerous company there assembled, knew not what to do. M. le Duc de Berry was there, and him they talked over as well as they could; and the numerous company was amused by the Grande Duchesse as well as she was able. The effect of the wine, in more ways than one, was such, that people were troubled. In spite of all, the Duchesse de Berry could not be sobered, so that it became necessary to carry her, drunk as she was, to Versailles. All the servants saw her state, and did

not keep it to themselves; nevertheless it was hidden from the King, from Monseigneur, and from Madame de Maintenon.

And now having related this incident, let me turn to Spain.

The events which took place in that country were so important, that I have thought it best to relate them in a continuous narrative without interruption. We must go back to the commencement of the year, and remember the dangerous state which Spain was thrown into, delivered up to her own weakness, France being too feeble to defend her; finding it difficult enough in fact to defend herself, and willing to abandon her ally entirely in the hope by this means to obtain peace.

Towards the end of March the King of Spain set out from Madrid to put himself at the head of his army in Aragon. Villadarias, one of his best and oldest general officers, was chosen to command under him. The King of Spain went from Saragossa to Lerida, where he was received with acclamations by the people and his army. He crossed the Sègre on the 14th of May, and advanced towards Balaguier, designing to lay siege to it. But heavy rains falling and causing the waters to rise, he was obliged to abandon his project. Joined a month afterwards by troops arrived from Flanders, he sought to attack the enemy, but was obliged to content himself for the moment by scouring the country, and taking some little towns where the Archduke had established stores. All this time the Count of Staremberg, who commanded the forces of the Archduke, was ill, and this circum-

stance the King of Spain was profiting by. But the Count grew well again quicker than was expected; promptly assembled his forces; marched against the army of the King of Spain; engaged it, and obliged it, all astonished, to retire under Saragossa. This ill-success fell entirely on Villadarias, who was accused of imprudence and negligence. The King of Spain was desperately in want of generals, and M. de Vendôme knowing this, and sick to death of banishment, had asked some little time before to be allowed to offer his services. At first he was snubbed. But the King of Spain, who eagerly wished for M. de Vendôme, despatched a courrier, after this defeat, begging the King to allow him to come and take command. The King held out no longer.

The Duc de Vendôme had prepared everything in advance; and having got over a slight attack of gout, hastened to Versailles. M. du Maine had negociated with Madame de Maintenon to obtain permission to take Vendôme to the Duchesse de Bourgogne. The opportunity seemed favourable to them. Vendôme was going to Spain to serve the brother and sister of the Duchesse; and his departure without seeing her would have had a very disagreeable effect. The Duc du Maine, followed by Vendôme, came then that day to the toilette of the Duchesse de Bourgogne. There happened that there was a very large company of men and ladies. The Duchesse rose for them, as she always did for the Princes of the Blood and others, and for all the Ducs and Duchesses, and sat down again as usual; but after this first glance, which could

not be refused, she, though usually very talkative and accustomed to look round, became for once attentive to her adornment, fixed her eyes on her mirror, and spoke no more to any one. M. du Maine, with M. de Vendôme stuck by his side, remained very disconcerted; and M. du Maine, usually so free and easy, dared not utter a single word. Nobody went near them or spoke to them. They remained thus about half a quarter of an hour, with an universal silence throughout the chamber—all eyes being fixed on them; and not being able to stand this any longer, slank away. This reception was not sufficiently agreeable to induce Vendôme to pay his respects at parting; for it would have been more embarrassing still if, when according to custom he advanced to kiss the Duchesse de Bourgogne, she had given him the unheard-of affront of a refusal. As for the Duc de Bourgogne, he received Vendôme tolerably politely, that is to say, much too well.

Staremberg meanwhile profited by the advantage he had gained; he attacked the Spanish army under Saragossa and totally defeated it. Artillery, baggage, all was lost; and the rout was complete. This misfortune happened on the 20th of August. The King, who had witnessed it from Saragossa, immediately afterwards took the road for Madrid. Bay, one of his generals, gathered together eighteen thousand men, with whom he retired to Tudela, without any impediment on the part of the enemy.

M. de Vendôme learnt the news of this defeat while on his way to Spain. Like a prudent man as he was, for his own interests, he stopped at once so as to see

what turn affairs were taking, and to know how to act. He waited at Bayonne, gaining time there by sending a courier to the King for instructions how to act, and remaining until the reply came. After its arrival he set out to continue his journey, and joined the King of Spain at Valladolid.

Staremberg, after his victory, was joined by the Archduke, and a debate soon took place as to the steps next to be taken. Staremberg was for giving battle to the army of eighteen thousand men under Bay, which I have just alluded to, beating it, and then advancing little by little into Spain, to make head against the vanquished army of the King. Had this advice been acted on, it could scarcely have failed to ruin the King of Spain, and the whole country must have fallen into the hands of the enemy. But it was not acted on. Stanhope, who commanded the English and Dutch troops, said that his Queen had ordered him to march upon Madrid when possible, in preference to every other place. He therefore proposed that they should go straight to Madrid with the Archduke, proclaim him King there, and thus terrify all Spain by seizing the capital. Staremberg, who admitted that the project was dazzling, sustained, however, that it was of little use, and of great danger. He tried all in his power to shake the inflexibility of Stanhope, but in vain, and at last was obliged to yield as being the feebler of the two. The time lost in this dispute saved the wreck of the army which had just been defeated. What was afterwards done saved the King of Spain.

When the plan of the allies became known, however

the consternation at Madrid, which was already great, was extreme. The King resolved to withdraw from a place which could not defend itself, and to carry away with him the Queen, the Prince, and the Councils. The grandees declared that they would follow the King and his fortune everywhere, and very few failed to do so; the departure succeeded the declaration in twenty-four hours. The Queen, holding the Prince in her arms, at a balcony of the palace, spoke to the people assembled beneath, with so much grace, force, and courage, that the success she had is incredible. The impression that the people received was communicated everywhere, and soon gained all the provinces. The Court thus left Madrid for the second time in the midst of the most lamentable cries, uttered from the bottom of their heart, by people who came from town and country, and who so wished to follow the King and Queen that considerable effort was required in order to induce them to return each one to his home.

Valladolid was the retreat of this wretched Court, which in the most terrible trouble it had yet experienced, lost neither judgment nor courage. Meanwhile the grandest and rarest example of attachment and of courage that had ever been heard of or seen was seen in Spain. Prelates and the humblest of the clergy, noblemen and the poorest people, lawyers and artisans, all bled themselves of the last drop of their substance, in order to form new troops and magazines, and to provide all kinds of provisions for the Court, and those who had followed it. Never nation made efforts so surprising with a unanimity and

a concert which acted everywhere at once. The Queen sold off all she possessed, received with her own hands sometimes even as little as ten pistoles, in order to content the zeal of those who brought, and thanked them with as much affection as they themselves displayed. She would continually say that she should like to put herself at the head of her troops, with her son in her arms. With this language and her conduct, she gained all hearts, and was very useful in such a strange extremity.

The Archduke meanwhile arrived in Madrid with his army. He entered there in triumph, and caused himself to be proclaimed King of Spain, by the violence of his troops, who dragged the trembling Corregidor through the streets, which for the most part were deserted, whilst the majority of the houses were without inhabitants, the few who remained having barricaded their doors and windows, and shut themselves up in the most remote places, where the troops did not dare to break in upon them, for fear of increasing the visible and general despair, and in the hope of gaining by gentleness. The entry of the Archduke was not less sad than his proclamation. A few scarcely audible and feeble acclamations were heard, but were so forced that the Archduke, sensibly astonished, made them cease of himself. He did not dare to lodge in the palace, or in the centre of Madrid, but slept at the extremity of the city, and even there only for two or three nights. Scarcely any damage was inflicted upon the town. Staremberg was careful to gain over the inhabitants by conciliation and clemency; yet his army perished of

all kinds of misery. Not a single person could be found to supply it with subsistence for man or beast—not even when offered money. Prayers, menaces, executions, all were perfectly useless. There was not a Castilian who would not have believed himself dishonoured in selling the least thing to the enemies, or in allowing them to take it. It is thus that this magnanimous people, without any other help than their courage and their fidelity, sustained themselves in the midst of their enemies, whose army they caused to perish, while at the same time, by inconceivable prodigies, they formed a new army for themselves, perfectly equipped and furnished, and put thus, by themselves, alone, and for the second time, the crown upon the head of their King, with a glory for ever an example to all the people of Europe; so true it is that nothing approaches the strength which is found in the heart of a nation for the succour and re-establishment of Kings! *

Stanhope, who had not failed to see the excellence of Staremberg's advice from the first moment of their dispute, now said insolently, that having executed the orders of his Queen, it was for Staremberg to draw the army out of its embarrassment. As for himself, he had nothing more to do in the matter! When ten or twelve days had elapsed, it was resolved to remove from Madrid towards Tolèdo. From the former place nothing

* This is a wiser observation, perhaps, than Saint Simon thought. Human nature is too apt to attribute its degradation to external violence, and to forget that the strongest allies of those that enslave it are found within its own breast.

was taken away, except some of the King's tapistry, which Stanhope was not ashamed to carry off, but which he did not long keep. This act of meanness was blamed even by his own countrymen.* Staremberg did not make a long stay at Toledo, but in quitting the town, burnt the superb palace in the Moorish style that Charles Quint had built there, and that was called the Alcazar. This was an irreparable damage, which he made believe happened accidentally.

As nothing now hindered the King of Spain from going to see his faithful subjects at Madrid, he entered that city on the 2nd of December, in the midst of an infinite crowd and incredible acclamations. He descended at the church of Notre Dame d'Atocha, and was three hours in arriving at the palace, so prodigious was the crowd. The city made a present to him of twenty thousand pistoles. On the fourth day after his arrival at Madrid, the King left, in order to join M. de Vendôme and his army.

But a little while before, this monarch was a fugitive wanderer, almost entirely destroyed, without troops, without money, and without subsistence. Now he found himself at the head of ten or fifteen thousand men well armed, well clad, well paid, with provisions, money, and ammunition in abundance; and this magical change was brought about by the sudden universal conspiracy of the unshakeable fidelity and attachment without example,

* It would be unjust not to notice here, accepting Saint Simon's statement of facts, that the French always indignantly point out the gathering of art-booty by English and other generals; but can find nothing save words of praise for the immense spoliations of this kind which they have themselves committed.

of all the orders of his subjects; by their efforts and their industry, as prodigious the one as the other.

Vendôme, in the utmost surprise at a change so little to be hoped for, wished to profit by it by joining the army under Bay, which was too weak itself to appear before Staremberg. Vendôme accordingly set about making this junction, which Staremberg thought only how to hinder. He knew well the Duc de Vendôme. In Savoy he had gained many a march upon him; had passed five rivers in front of him; and in spite of him, had led his troops to M. de Savoie. Staremberg thought only therefore in what manner he could lay a trap for M. de Vendôme, in which he, with his army, might fall and break his neck without hope of escape. With this view he put his army into quarters, access to which was easy everywhere, which were near each other, and which could assist each other in case of need. He then placed all his English and Dutch, Stanhope at their head, in Brighuega, a little fortified town in good condition, for defence. It was at the head of all the quarters of Staremberg's army, and at the entrance of a plain over which M. de Vendôme had to pass to join Bay.

Staremberg was on the point of being joined by his army of Estremadura, so that in the event of M. de Vendôme attacking Brighuega, as he hoped, he had a large number of troops to depend upon.

Vendôme, meanwhile, set out on his march. He was informed of Staremberg's position, but in a manner just such as Staremberg wished; that is to say, he was led to believe that Stanhope had made a wrong move

in occupying Brighuega, that he was too far removed from Staremberg to receive any assistance from him, and that he could be easily overpowered. That is how matters appeared to Vendôme. He hastened his march, therefore, made his dispositions, and on the 8th of December, after mid-day, approached Brighuega, called upon it to surrender, and upon its refusal, prepared to attack it.

Immediately afterwards his surprise was great, upon discovering that there were so many troops in the town, and that instead of having to do with a mere outpost, he was engaged against a place of some consequence. He did not wish to retire, and perhaps he could not have done so with impunity. He set to, therefore, storming in his usual manner, and did what he could to excite his troops to make short work of a conquest so different from what he had imagined, and so dangerous to delay.

Nevertheless, the weight of his mistake pressed upon him as the hours passed and he saw fresh enemies arrive. Two of his assaults had failed: he determined to play at double or quits, and ordered a third assault. While the dispositions were being made, on the 9th of December he learnt that Staremberg was marching against him with four or five thousand men, that is to say, with just about half of what he really led. In this anguish, Vendôme did not hesitate to stake even the Crown of Spain upon the hazard of the die. His third attack was made with all the force of which he was capable. Every one of the assailants knew the extremity of the danger, and behaved with so much

valour and impetuosity, that the town was carried in spite of an obstinate resistance. The besieged were obliged to yield, and to the number of eight battalions and eight squadrons, surrendered themselves prisoners of war, and with them, Stanhope, their general, who so triumphant in Madrid, was here obliged to disgorge the King's tapestries that he had taken from the palace.

While the capitulation was being made, various information came to Vendôme of Staremberg's march, which it was necessary, above all, to hide from the prisoners, who, had they known their liberator was only a league and a half distant from them, as he was then, would have broken the capitulation, and defended themselves. M. de Vendôme's embarrassment was great. He had, and at the same time, to march out and meet Staremberg and to get rid of his numerous prisoners. All was done, however, very successfully. Sufficient troops were left in Brighuega to attend to the evacuation, and when it was at an end, those troops left the place themselves, and joined their comrades, who, with M. de Vendôme, were waiting for Staremberg outside the town, at Villaviciosa, a little place that afterwards gave its name to the battle. Only four hundred men were left in Brighuega.

M. de Vendôme arranged his army in order of battle in a tolerably open plain, but embarrassed by little knolls in several places, very disadvantageous for the cavalry. Immediately afterwards the cannon began to fire on both sides, and almost immediately the two

lines of the King of Spain prepared to charge. After the battle had proceeded some time, M. de Vendôme perceived that his centre began to give way, and that the left of his cavalry could not break the right of the enemies'. He thought all was lost, and gave orders accordingly to his men to retire towards Torija. Straightway, too, he directed himself in that direction, with the King of Spain and a good part of his troops. While thus retreating, he learnt that two of his officers had charged the enemy's infantry with the cavalry they had at their orders, had much knocked it about, and had rendered themselves masters, on the field of battle, of a large number of prisoners, and of the artillery that the enemy had abandoned. News so agreeable and so little expected, determined the Duc de Vendôme and the King of Spain to return to the battle with the troops that had followed them. The day was, in fact, won just as night came on. The enemies abandoned twenty pieces of cannon, two mortars, their wounded, and their equipages; and numbers of them were taken prisoners. But Staremberg, having all the night to himself, succeeded in retiring in good order with seven or eight thousand men. His baggage and the majority of his waggons fell a prey to the vanquisher. Counting the garrison of Brighuega, the loss to the enemy was eleven thousand men killed or taken, their ammunition, artillery, baggage, and a great number of flags and standards.

When we consider the extreme peril the Crown of Spain ran in these engagements, and that this time, if things had gone ill, there was no resource, we tremble

still. Had a catastrophe happened, there was nothing to hope from France. Its exhaustion and its losses would not have enabled it to lend aid. In its desire for peace, in fact, it would have hailed the loss of the Spanish crown as a relief. The imprudence, therefore, of M. de Vendôme in so readily falling into the snare laid for him, is all the more to be blamed. He takes no trouble to inform himself of the dispositions of the enemy; he comes upon a place which he believes a mere post, but soon sees it contains a numerous garrison, and finds that the principal part of the enemy's army is ready to fall upon him as he makes the attack. Then he begins to see in what ship he has embarked; he sees the double peril of a double action to sustain against Stanhope, whom he must overwhelm by furious assault, and against Staremberg, whom he must meet and defeat; or leave to the enemies the Crown of Spain, and perhaps the person of Philip V., as price of his folly. Brighuega is gained, but it is without him. Villaviciosa is gained, but it is also without him. This hero is not sharp-sighted enough to see success when it comes. He thinks it defeat, and gives orders for retreat. When informed that the battle is gained, he returns to the field, and as daylight comes, perceives the fact to be so. He is quite without shame for his stupid mistake, and cries out that he has vanquished, with an impudence to which the Spaniards were not accustomed; and, to conclude, he allows Staremberg's army to get clean off, instead of destroying it at once, as he might have done, and so finished the war. Such were the exploits of this great warrior, so desired in Spain to resuscitate it,

and such were the first proofs of his capacity upon arriving in that country! *

At the moment that the King of Spain was led back to the battle-field by Vendôme, and that they could no longer doubt their good fortune, he sent a courier to the Queen. Her mortal anguish was on the instant changed into so great a joy, that she went out immediately on foot into the streets of Vittoria, where all was delight; as it soon was over all Spain. The news of the victory was brought to the King (of France) by Don Gaspard de Zuniga, who gave an exact account of all that had occurred, hiding nothing respecting M. de Vendôme, who was thus unmasked, and disgraced, in spite of every efforton the part of his cabal to defend him.

Among the allies, all the blame of this defeat fell upon Stanhope. Seven or eight hours more of resistance on his part at Brighuega would have enabled Staremberg to come up to his assistance, and all the resources of Spain would then have been annihilated. Staremberg, outraged at the ill-success of his undertaking, cried out loudly against Stanhope. Some of the principal officers who had been at Brighuega seconded

* Despite Vendôme's abominable character, it cannot but be evident that Saint Simon here gives way to his hatred, and carps unjustifiably. If we were to deprive a general of the benefit of the chances of war, and duly separate from surrounding circumstances what is due to his own unaided genius, how many modern heroes would dwindle to no better than scarecrows! As to the effect of Vendôme's conduct at Court and on the mind of the King, it is perfectly indifferent. Defeats formerly made him a hero; victories now prove him a fool. This is perhaps the most striking instance in the whole of Saint Simon's Memoirs of the absolute nullity of this Great Louis XIV.

these complaints. Stanhope even did not dare to deny his fault. He was allowed to demand leave of absence to go home and defend himself. He was badly received, stripped of all military rank in England and Holland, and (as well as the officers under him) was not without fear of his degradation, and was even in danger of his life.

This recital of the events that took place in Spain, has led me away from other matters of earlier date. It is time now that I should return to them.

CHAPTER XXVII.

State of the Country—New Taxes—The King's Conscience troubled—Decision of the Sorbonne—Debate in the Council—Effect of the Royal Tithe—Tax on Agioteurs—Merriment at Court—Death of a Son of Maréchal Boufflers—The Jesuits.

Although, as we have just seen, matters were beginning to brighten a little in Spain, they remained as dull and overcast as ever in France. The impossibility of obtaining peace, and the exhaustion of the realm, threw the King into the most cruel anguish, and Desmarets into the saddest embarrassment. The paper of all kinds with which trade was inundated, and which had all more or less lost credit, made a chaos for which no remedy could be perceived. State-bills, bank-bills, receiver-general's-bills, title-bills, utensil-bills, were the ruin of private people, who were forced by the King to take them in payment, and who lost half, two-thirds, and sometimes more by the transaction. This depreciation enriched the money people, at the expense of the public; and the circulation of money ceased, because there was no longer any money; because the King no longer paid anybody, but drew his revenues still; and because all the specie out of his control was locked up in the coffers of the possessors.

The capitation tax was doubled and trebled, at the will of the Intendants of the Provinces, merchandise

and all kinds of provision were taxed to the amount of four times their value; new taxes of all kinds and upon all sorts of things were exacted; all this crushed nobles and roturiers, lords and clergy, and yet did not bring enough to the King, who drew the blood of all his subjects, squeezed out their very marrow, without distinction, and who enriched an army of tax-gatherers and officials of all kinds, in whose hands the best part of what was collected remained.

Desmarets, in whom the King had been forced to put all his confidence in finance matters, conceived the idea of establishing in addition to so many taxes, that Royal Tithe upon all the property of each community and of each private person of the realm, that the Maréchal de Vauban, on the one hand, and Boisguilbert on the other, had formerly proposed; but, as I have already described, as a simple and sole tax which would suffice for all, which would all enter the coffers of the King, and by means of which every other impost would be abolished.

We have seen what success this proposition met with; how the financiers trembled at it; how the ministers blushed at it, with what anathemas it was rejected, and to what extent these two excellent and skilful citizens were disgraced. All this must be recollected here, since Desmarets, who had not lost sight of this system (not as relief and remedy—unpardonable crimes in the financial doctrine), now had recourse to it.

He imparted his project to three friends, Councillors of State, who examined it well, and worked hard to see how to overcome the obstacles which arose in the way

of its execution. In the first place it was necessary in order to collect this tax, to draw from each person a clear statement of his wealth, of his debts, and so on. It was necessary to demand sure proofs on these points so as not to be deceived. Here was all the difficulty. Nothing was thought of the desolation this extra impost must cause to a prodigious number of men, or of their despair upon finding themselves obliged to disclose their family secrets; to have a lamp thrown, as it were, upon their most delicate parts; all these things, I say, went for nothing. Less than a month sufficed these humane commissioners to render an account of this gentle project to the Cyclop who had charged them with it. Desmarets thereupon proposed it to the King, who, accustomed as he was to the most ruinous imposts, could not avoid being terrified at this. For a long while he had heard nothing talked of but the most extreme misery; this increase saddened him in a manner so evident, that his valets perceived it several days' running, and were so disturbed at it, that Maréchal (who related all this curious anecdote to me) made bold to speak to the King upon this sadness, fearing for his health. The King avowed to him that he felt infinite trouble, and threw himself vaguely upon the state of affairs. Eight or ten days after (during which he continued to feel the same melancholy), the King regained his usual calmness, and called Maréchal to explain the cause of his trouble.

The King related to Maréchal that the extremity of his affairs had forced him to put on furious imposts; that setting aside compassion, scruples had much tor-

mented him for taking thus the wealth of his subjects; that at last he had unbosomed himself to the Père Tellier, who had asked for a few days to think upon the matter, and that he had returned after having had a consultation with some of the most skilful doctors of the Sorbonne, who had decided that *all the wealth of his subjects was his, and that when he took it he only took what belonged to him!* The King added, that this decision had taken away all his scruples, and had restored to him the calm and tranquillity he had lost. Maréchal was so astonished, so bewildered to hear this recital that he could not offer one word. Happily for him, the King quitted him almost immediately, and Maréchal remained some time in the same place, scarcely knowing where he was.*

After the King had been thus satisfied by his confessor, no time was lost in establishing the tax. On Tuesday, the 30th of September, Desmarets entered the Finance Council with the necessary edict in his bag.

For some days everybody had known of this bombshell in the air, and had trembled with that remnant of hope which is founded only upon desire; all the Court as well as all Paris waited in a dejected sadness to see what would happen. People whispered to each other,

* The consultation related in the text is of course only astonishing from the clear manner in which the monarchical theory is propounded, and from the semi-hypocritical conduct of the King. Imagine a royal personage having scruples at such an age, and under such circumstances! It is interesting to compare this anecdote with the invectives of Estienne de la Boëtie, who accuses monarchy of this very assumption that all property belongs to it.

and even when the project was rendered public, no one dared to talk of it aloud.

On the day above-named, the King brought forward this measure in the Council, by saying, that the impossibility of obtaining peace, and the extreme difficulty of sustaining the war, had caused Desmarets to look about in order to discover some means, which should appear good, of raising money; that he had pitched upon this tax; that he (the King), although sorry to adopt such a resource, approved it, and had no doubt the Council would do so likewise, when it was explained to them. Desmarets, in a pathetic discourse, then dwelt upon the reasons which had induced him to propose this tax, and afterwards read the edict through from beginning to end without interruption.

No one spoke, moreover, when it was over, until the King asked d'Aguesseau his opinion. D'Aguesseau replied, that it would be necessary for him to take home the edict and read it through very carefully before expressing an opinion. The King said that d'Aguesseau was right—it *would* take a long time to examine the edict—but after all, examination was unnecessary, and would only be loss of time. All remained silent again, except the Duc de Beauvilliers, who, seduced by the nephew of Colbert, whom he thought an oracle in finances, said a few words in favour of the project.

Thus was settled this bloody business, and immediately after signed, sealed, and registered, among stifled sobs, and published amidst the most gentle but most piteous complaints. The product of this tax was nothing like so much as had been imagined in this bureau of

Cannibals; and the King did not pay a single farthing more to anyone than he had previously done. Thus all the fine relief expected by this tax ended in smoke.

The Maréchal de Vauban had died of grief at the ill-success of his task and his zeal, as I have related in its place. Poor Boisguilbert, in the exile his zeal had brought him, was terribly afflicted, to find he had innocently given advice which he intended for the relief of the state, but which had been made use of in this frightful manner. Every man, without exception, saw himself a prey to the tax-gatherers: reduced to calculate and discuss with them his own patrimony, to receive their signature and their protection under the most terrible pains; to show in public all the secrets of his family; to bring into the broad open daylight domestic turpitudes enveloped until then in the folds of precautions the wisest and the most multiplied. Many had to convince the tax agents, but vainly, that although proprietors, they did not enjoy the tenth part of their property. All Languedoc offered to give up its entire wealth, if allowed to enjoy, free from every impost, the tenth part of it. The próposition not only was not listened to, but was reputed an insult and severely blamed.

Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne spoke openly against this tax, and against the finance people, who lived upon the very marrow of the people; spoke with a just and holy anger that recalled the memory of Saint Louis, of Louis XII., father of the People, and of Louis the Just. Monseigneur, too, moved by this indignation, so unusual, of his son, sided with him, and

showed anger at so many exactions as injurious as barbarous, and at so many insignificant men so monstrously enriched with the nation's blood. Both father and son infinitely surprised those who heard them, and made themselves looked upon in some sort, as resources from which something might hereafter be hoped for. But the edict was issued, and though there might be some hope in the future, there was none in the present. And no one knew who was to be the real successor of Louis XIV., and how under the next government we were to be still more overwhelmed than under this one.

One result of this tax was, that it enabled the King to augment all his infantry with five men per company.

A tax was also levied upon the usurers, who had much gained by trafficking in the paper of the King, that is to say, had taken advantage of the need of those to whom the King gave this paper in payment. These usurers are called *agioteurs*. Their mode was, ordinarily, to give, for example, according as the holder of paper was more or less pressed, three or four hundred francs (the greater part often in provisions), for a bill of a thousand francs! This game was called *agio*. It was said that thirty millions were obtained from this tax. Many people gained much by it; I know not if the King was the better treated.

Soon after this the coin was re-coined, by which great profit was made for the King, and much wrong done to private people and to trade. In all times it has been regarded as a very great misfortune to meddle with corn and money. Desmarets has accustomed us

to tricks with the money; M. le Duc and Cardinal Fleury to interfere with corn and to fictitious famine.

At the commencement of December, the King declared that he wished there should be, contrary to custom, plays and "apartments" at Versailles even when Monseigneur should be at Meudon. He thought apparently he must keep his Court full of amusements, to hide, if it was possible, abroad and at home, the disorder and the extremity of affairs. For the same reason, the carnival was opened early this season, and all through the winter there were many balls of all kinds at the Court, where the wives of the ministers gave very magnificent displays, like fêtes, to Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne and to all the Court.

But Paris did not remain less wretched or the provinces less desolated.

And thus I have arrived at the end of 1710.*

* I cannot refrain, at the end of this short narrative, containing so terrible an exposure of the principles and conduct of the Great King of the Great Age, from referring to the trite observation—trite from its extreme truth—that we have here sufficient explanation, not only of the occurrence, but of the horrors of the French Revolution. We must remember that, with rare exceptions, for a thousand years France was subject to tyrants of the same nature; and that almost always when the country was not desolated by oppression and taxation, it was desolated by bigotry or licentiousness. All kings as such—unless they have been taught to be mere magistrates, instances of which are few—look, as Louis XIV. did, upon the nation as their property. This is why they not only seize money wherever they can find it, but interfere with everything, from the religious belief, to the wives and daughters of their subjects. A calculation has been made that six thousand persons perished by executions of various kinds during the French Revolution. If we compare this number with the multitudes who suffered each famine brought on by the arrangements of the King and his ministers and the connivance of the nobility, we shall be astonished at the clemency shown by the people in the hour of vengeance and triumph.

At the commencement of the following year, 1711,—that is to say, a few days after the middle of March,—a cruel misfortune happened to the Maréchal de Boufflers. His eldest son was fourteen years of age, handsome, well made, of much promise, and who succeeded marvellously at the Court, when his father presented him there to the King to thank his Majesty for the reversion of the government of Flow and of Lille. He returned afterwards to the College of the Jesuits, where he was being educated. I know not what youthful folly he was guilty of with the two sons of d'Argenson; but the Jesuits, wishing to show that they made no distinction of persons, whipped the little lad, because, to say the truth, they had nothing to fear from the Maréchal de Boufflers; but they took good care to let the others off, although equally guilty, because they had to reckon with d'Argenson, lieutenant of the police, of much credit in book matters, Jansenism, and all sorts of things and affairs in which they were interested.

Little Boufflers, who was full of courage, and who had done no more than the two Argensons, and with them, was seized with such despair, that he fell ill that same day. He was carried to the Maréchal's house, but it was impossible to save him. The heart was seized, the blood diseased; the purples appeared; in four days all was over. The state of the father and mother may be imagined! The King, who was much touched by it, did not let them ask or wait for him. He sent one of his gentlemen to testify to them the share he had in their loss, and announced that he would give to their remaining son what he had already

given to the other. As for the Jesuits, the universal cry against them was prodigious; but that was all. This would be the place, now that I am speaking of the Jesuits, to speak of another affair in which they were concerned. But I pass over, for the present, the dissensions that broke out at about this time, and that ultimately led to the famous Papal Bull Unigenitus, so fatal to the Church and to the State, so shameful for Rome, and so injurious to religion; and I proceed to speak of the great event of this year, which led to others so memorable and so unexpected.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

My interview with Du Mont—A Mysterious Communication—Anger of Monseigneur against me—Household of the Duchesse de Berry—Monseigneur taken ill of the Small Pox—Effect of the News—The King goes to Meudon—The Danger diminishes—Madame de Maintenon at Meudon—The Court at Versailles—Hopes and Fears—The Danger returns—Death of Monseigneur—Conduct of the King.

But in order to understand the part I played in the event I have alluded to and the interest I took in it, it is necessary for me to relate some personal matters that occurred in the previous year. Du Mont was one of the confidants of Monseigneur; but also had never forgotten what his father owed to mine. Some days after the commencement of the second voyage to Marly, subsequently to the marriage of the Duchesse de Berry, as I was coming back from the King's mass, the said Du Mont, in the crush at the door of the little salon of the chapel, took an opportunity when he was not perceived, to pull me by my coat, and when I turned round put a finger to his lips, and pointed towards the gardens which are at the bottom of the river, that is to say, of that superb cascade which the Cardinal Fleury has destroyed, and which faced the rear of the château. At the same time Du Mont whispered in my ear; "To the arbours!" That part of the garden was surrounded with arbours palisaded so as to conceal

what was inside. It was the least frequented place at Marly, leading to nothing; and in the afternoon even, and the evening, few people within them.

Uneasy to know what Du Mont wished to communicate with so much mystery, I gently went towards the arbours, where, without being seen, I looked through one of the openings until I saw him appear. He slipped in by the corner of the chapel, and I went towards him. As he joined me he begged me to return towards the river, so as to be still more out of the way; and then we set ourselves against the thickest palisades, as far as possible from all openings, so as to be still more concealed.* All this surprised and frightened me: I was still more so when I learned what was the matter.

Du Mont then told me, on condition that I promised not to show that I knew it, and not to make use of my knowledge in any way without his consent, that two days after the marriage of the Duc de Berry, having entered towards the end of the morning the cabinet of Monseigneur, he found him alone, looking very serious. He followed Monseigneur, through the gardens alone, until he entered by the window the apartments of the Princesse de Conti, who was also alone. As he entered Monseigneur said with an air not natural to him, and very inflamed—as if by way of interrogation—that she "sat very quietly there." This frightened her so, that

* To understand all this precaution, it is necessary to remember what has previously been told of the company of Swiss spies set on foot by the King for the gardens of Marly. What real man would be a courtier here on such conditions?

she asked if there was any news from Flanders, and what had happened? Monseigneur answered, in a tone of great annoyance, that there was no news except that the Duc de Saint Simon had said, that now that the marriage of the Duc de Berry was brought about, it would be proper to drive away Madame la Duchesse and the Princesse de Conti, after which it would be easy to govern "the great imbecile," meaning himself. This was why he thought she ought not to be so much at her ease. Then, suddenly, as if lashing his sides to get into a greater rage, he spoke in a way such a speech would have deserved, added menaces, said that he would have the Duc de Bourgogne to fear me, to put me aside, and separate himself entirely from me. This sort of soliloquy lasted a long time, and I was not told what the Princesse de Conti said to it; but from the silence of Du Mont, her annoyance at the marriage I had brought about, and other reasons, it seems to me unlikely that she tried to soften Monseigneur.

Du Mont begged me not, for a long time at least, to show that I knew what had taken place, and to behave with the utmost prudence. Then he fled away by the path he had come by, fearing to be seen. I remained walking up and down in the arbour all the time, reflecting on the wickedness of my enemies, and the gross credulity of Monseigneur. Then I ran away, and escaped to Madame de Saint Simon, who, as astonished and frightened as I, said not a word of the communication I had received.

I never knew who had served me this ill-turn with Monseigneur, but I always suspected Mademoiselle de

Lillebonne. After a long time, having obtained with difficulty the consent of the timid Du Mont, I made Madame de Saint Simon speak to the Duchesse de Bourgogne, who undertook to arrange the affair as well as it could be arranged. The Duchesse spoke indeed to Monseigneur, and showed him how ridiculously he had been deceived, when he was persuaded that I could ever have entertained the ideas attributed to me. Monseigneur admitted that he had been carried away by anger ; and that there was no likelihood that I should have thought of anything so wicked and incredible.

About this time the house of the Duc and Duchesse de Berry was constituted. Racilly obtained the splendid appointment of first surgeon, and was worthy of it; but the Duchesse de Berry wept bitterly, because she did not consider him of high family enough. She was not so delicate about La Haye, whose appointment she rapidly secured. The fellow looked in the glass more complaisantly than ever. He was well made, but stiff, and with a face not at all handsome, and looking as if it had been skinned. He was happy in more ways than one, and was far more attached to his new mistress than to his master. The King was very angry when he learned that the Duc de Berry had supplied himself with such an assistant.

Meantime I continued on very uneasy terms with Monseigneur, since I had learned his strange credulity with respect to me. I began to feel my position very irksome, not to say painful, on this account. Meudon I would not go to—for me it was a place infested with

demons — yet by stopping away I ran great risks of losing the favour and consideration I enjoyed at Court. Monseigneur was a man so easily imposed upon, as I had already experienced, and his intimate friends were so unscrupulous that there was no saying what might be invented on the one side and swallowed on the other, to my discredit. Those friends, too, were, I knew, enraged against me for divers weighty reasons, and would stop at nothing, I was satisfied, to procure my downfall. For want of better support I sustained myself with courage. I said to myself, "We never experience all the evil or all the good that we have apparently the most reason to expect." I hoped, therefore, against hope, terribly troubled it must be confessed on the score of Meudon. At Easter this year I went away to La Ferté, far from the Court and the world, to solace myself as I could ; but this thorn in my side was cruelly sharp ! At the moment the most unlooked for it pleased God to deliver me from it.

At La Ferté I had but few guests. M. de Saint Louis, an old brigadier of cavalry, and a Normandy gentleman, who had been in my regiment, and who was much attached to me. On Saturday, the 11th of the month, and the day before Quasimodo, I had been walking with them all the morning, and I had entered all alone into my cabinet a little before dinner, when a courier sent by Madame de Saint Simon, gave me a letter from her, in which I was informed that Monseigneur was ill !

I learnt afterwards that this Prince, while on his way to Meudon for the Easter fêtes, met at Chaville a priest,

who was carrying Our Lord to a sick person. Monseigneur, and Madame de Bourgogne, who was with him, knelt down to adore the Host, and then Monseigneur inquired what was the malady of the patient. "The small pox," he was told. That disease was very prevalent just then. Monseigneur had had it, but very lightly, and when young. He feared it very much, and was struck with the answer he now received. In the evening he said to Boudin, his chief doctor, "I should not be surprised if I were to have the small pox." The day, however, passed over as usual.

On the morrow, Thursday, the 9th, Monseigneur rose, and meant to go out wolf hunting; but as he was dressing, such a fit of weakness seized him, that he fell into his chair. Boudin made him get into bed again; but all the day his pulse was in an alarming state. The King, only half informed by Fagon of what had taken place, believed there was nothing the matter, and went out walking at Marly after dinner, receiving news from time to time. Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne and Madame de Bourgogne dined at Meudon, and they would not quit Monseigneur for one moment. The Princesse added to the strict duties of a daughter-in-law all that her gracefulness could suggest, and gave everything to Monseigneur with her own hand. Her heart could not have been troubled by what her reason foresaw; but, nevertheless, her care and attention were extreme, without any airs of affectation or acting. The Duc de Bourgogne, simple and holy as he was, and full of the idea of his duty, exaggerated his attention; and although there was a strong suspicion of the small pox,

neither quitted Monseigneur, except for the King's supper.

The next day, Friday, the 10th, in reply to his express demands, the King was informed of the extremely dangerous state of Monseigneur. He had said on the previous evening that he would go on the following morning to Meudon, and remain there during all the illness of Monseigneur, whatever its nature might be. He was now as good as his word. Immediately after mass he set out for Meudon. Before doing so, he forbade his children, and all who had not had the small pox, to go there, which was suggested by a motive of kindness. With Madame de Maintenon and a small suite, he had just taken up his abode in Meudon, when Madame de Saint Simon sent me the letter of which I have just made mention.

I will continue to speak of myself with the same truthfulness I speak of others, and with as much exactness as possible. According to the terms on which I was with Monseigneur and his intimates, may be imagined the impression made upon me by this news. I felt that one way or other, well or ill, the malady of Monseigneur would soon terminate. I was quite at my ease at La Ferté. I resolved therefore to wait there until I received fresh particulars. I despatched a courier to Madame de Saint Simon, requesting her to send me another the next day, and I passed the rest of this day, in an ebb and flow of feelings; the man and the Christian struggling against the man and the courtier, and in the midst of a crowd of vague fancies catch-

ing glimpses of the future, painted in the most agreeable colours.

The courier I expected so impatiently arrived the next day, Sunday, after dinner. The small pox had declared itself, I learnt, and was going on as well as could be wished. I believed Monseigneur saved, and wished to remain at my own house; nevertheless I took advice, as I have done all my life, and with great regret set out the next morning. At La Queue, about six leagues from Versailles, I met a financier of the name of La Fontaine, whom I knew well. He was coming from Paris and Versailles, and came up to me as I changed horses. Monseigneur, he said, was going on admirably; and he added details which convinced me he was out of all danger. I arrived at Versailles, full of this opinion, which was confirmed by Madame de Saint Simon and everybody I met, so that nobody any longer feared, except on account of the treacherous nature of this disease in a very fat man of fifty.

The King held his Council, and worked in the evening with his ministers as usual. He saw Monseigneur morning and evening, oftentimes in the afternoon, and always remained long by the bedside. On the Monday I arrived he had dined early, and had driven to Marly, where the Duchesse de Bourgogne joined him. He saw, in passing on the outskirts of the garden of Versailles, his grandchildren, who had come out to meet him, but he would not let them come near, and said "good day" from a distance. The Duchesse de Bourgogne had had the small pox, but no trace was left.

The King only liked his own houses, and could not bear to be anywhere else. This was why his visits to Meudon were few and short, and only made from complaisance. Madame de Maintenon was still more out of her element there. Although her chamber was everywhere a sanctuary, where only ladies entitled to the most extreme familiarity entered, she always wanted another retreat near at hand entirely inaccessible, except to the Duchesse de Bourgogne alone, and that only for a few instants at a time. Thus she had Saint Cyr for Versailles and for Marly; and at Marly also a particular retiring place; at Fontainebleau she had her town house. Seeing therefore that Monseigneur was getting on well, and that a long sojourn at Meudon would be necessary, the upholsterers of the King were ordered to furnish a house in the park which once belonged to the Chancellor le Tellier, but which Monseigneur had bought.

When I arrived at Versailles, I wrote to M. de Beauvilliers at Meudon, praying him to apprise the King that I had returned on account of the illness of Monseigneur, and that I would have gone to see him, but that, never having had the small pox, I was included in the prohibition. M. de Beauvilliers did as I asked, and sent word back to me that my return had been very well timed, and that the King still forbade me as well as Madame de Saint Simon to go to Meudon. This fresh prohibition did not distress me in the least. I was informed of all that was passing there, and that satisfied me.

There were yet contrasts at Meudon worth noticing.

Mademoiselle Choin never appeared while the King was with Monseigneur, but kept close in her loft. When the coast was clear, she came out, and took up her position at the sick man's bedside. All sorts of compliments passed between her and Madame de Maintenon, yet the two ladies never met. The King asked Madame de Maintenon if she had seen Mademoiselle Choin, and upon learning that she had not, was but ill-pleased. Therefore Madame de Maintenon sent excuses and apologies to Mademoiselle Choin, and hoped she said to see her soon,—strange compliments from one chamber to another under the same roof. They never saw each other afterwards.

It should be observed, that Père Tellier was also incognito at Meudon, and dwelt in a retired room, from which he issued to see the King, but never approached the apartments of Monseigneur.

Versailles presented another scene. Monseigneur le Duc and Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne held their Court openly there; and this Court resembled the first gleamings of the dawn. All the Court assembled there; all Paris also; and as discretion and precaution were never French virtues, all Meudon came as well. People were believed on their word when they declared that they had not entered the apartments of Monseigneur that day, and consequently could not bring the infection. When the Prince and Princesse rose, when they went to bed, when they dined and supped with the ladies,—all public conversations—all meals—all assemblies—were opportunities of paying court to them. The apartments could not contain the crowd.

The characteristic features of the room were many. Couriers arrived every quarter of an hour, and reminded people of the illness of Monseigneur—he was going on as well as could be expected; confidence and hope were easily felt; but there was an extreme desire to please at the new Court. The young Prince and Princesse exhibited majesty and gravity, mixed with gaiety; obligingly received all, continually spoke to every one; the crowd wore an air of complaisance; reciprocal satisfaction showed in every face; the Duc and Duchesse de Berry were treated almost as nobody. Thus five days fled away, in increasing thought of future events—in preparation to be ready for whatever might happen.

On Tuesday, the 14th of April, I went to see the Chancellor, and asked for information upon the state of Monseigneur. He assured me it was good, and repeated to me the words Fagon had spoken to him "that things were going on according to their wishes, and beyond their hopes." The Chancellor appeared to me very confident, and I had faith in him, so much the more, because he was on an extremely good footing with Monseigneur. The Prince, indeed, had so much recovered, that the fish-women came in a body the self-same day to congratulate him, as they did after his attack of indigestion. They threw themselves at the foot of his bed, which they kissed several times, and in their joy said they would go back to Paris and have a *Te Deum* sung. But Monseigneur, who was not insensible to these marks of popular affection, told them it was not yet time,

thanked them, and gave them a dinner, and some money.

As I was going home, I saw the Duchesse d'Orleans walking on a terrace. She called to me; but I pretended not to notice her, because La Montauban was with her, and hastened home, my mind filled with this news, and withdrew to my cabinet. Almost immediately afterwards Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans joined me there. We were bursting to speak to each other alone, upon a point on which our thoughts were alike. She had left Meudon not an hour before, and she had the same tale to tell as the Chancellor. Everybody was at ease there she said; and then she extolled the care and capacities of the doctors, exaggerating their success; and, to speak frankly and to our shame, she and I lamented together to see Monseigneur, in spite of his age and his fat, escape from so dangerous an illness. She reflected seriously but wittily, that after an illness of this sort, apoplexy was not to be looked for; that an attack of indigestion was equally unlikely to arise, considering the care Monseigneur had taken not to over-gorge himself since his recent danger; and we concluded more than dolefully, that henceforth we must make up our minds that the Prince would live and reign for a long time. In a word, we let ourselves loose in this rare conversation, although not without an occasional scruple of conscience which disturbed it. Madame de Saint Simon all-devoutly tried what she could to put a drag upon our tongues, but the drag broke, so to speak, and we continued our free discourse, humanly speaking very reasonable on our

parts, but which we felt, nevertheless, was not according to religion. Thus two hours passed, seemingly very short. Madame d'Orleans went away, and I repaired with Madame de Saint Simon to receive a numerous company.

While thus all was tranquillity at Versailles, and even at Meudon, everything had changed its aspect at the château. The King had seen Monseigneur several times during the day; but in his after-dinner visit he was so much struck with the extraordinary swelling of the face and of the head, that he shortened his stay, and, on leaving the château, shed tears. He was re-assured as much as possible, and after the council he took a walk in the garden.

Nevertheless, Monseigneur had already mistaken Madame la Princesse de Conti for some one else; and Boudin, the doctor, was alarmed. Monseigneur himself had been so from the first, and he admitted, that for a long time before being attacked, he had been very unwell, and so much on Good Friday, that he had been unable to read his prayer-book at chapel.

Towards four o'clock he grew worse, so much so that Boudin proposed to Fagon to call in other doctors, more familiar with the disease than they were. But Fagon flew into a rage at this, and would call in nobody. He declared that it would be better to act for themselves, and to keep Monseigneur's state secret, although it was hourly growing worse, and towards seven o'clock was perceived by several valets and courtiers. But nobody dared to open his mouth before Fagon, and the King was actually allowed to go

to supper, and to finish it without interruption, believing on the faith of Fagon that Monseigneur was going on well.

While the King supped thus tranquilly, all those who were in the sick chamber began to lose their wits. Fagon and the others poured down physic on physic, without leaving time for any to work. The Curé, who was accustomed to go and learn the news every evening, found, against all custom, the doors thrown wide open, and the valets in confusion. He entered the chamber, and perceiving what was the matter, ran to the bedside, took the hand of Monseigneur, spoke to him of God, and seeing him full of consciousness, but scarcely able to speak, drew from him a sort of confession, of which nobody had hitherto thought, and suggested some acts of contrition. The poor Prince repeated distinctly several words suggested to him, and confusedly answered others, struck his breast, squeezed the Curé's hand, appeared penetrated with the best sentiments, and received with a contrite and willing air the absolution of the Curé.

As the King rose from the supper-table, he well nigh fell backward when Fagon, coming forward, cried in great trouble that all was lost. It may be imagined what terror seized all the company at this abrupt passage from perfect security to hopeless despair. The King, scarcely master of himself, at once began to go towards the apartment of Monseigneur, and repelled very stiffly the indiscreet eagerness of some courtiers who wished to prevent him, saying that he would see his son again, and be quite certain that nothing could

be done. As he was about to enter the chamber, Madame la Princesse de Conti presented herself before him, and prevented him from going in. She pushed him back with her hands, and said that henceforth he had only to think of himself. Then the King, nearly fainting from a shock so complete and so sudden, fell upon a sofa that stood near. He asked unceasingly for news of all who passed, but scarce anybody dared to reply to him. He had sent for Pére Tellier who went into Monseigneur's room; but it was no longer time. It is true the Jesuit, perhaps to console the King, said that he gave him a well-founded absolution. Madame de Maintenon hastened after the King, and sitting down beside him on the same sofa, tried to cry. She endeavoured to lead away the King into the carriage already waiting for him in the court-yard, but he would not go, and sat thus outside the door until Monseigneur had expired.

The agony, without consciousness, of Monseigneur lasted more than an hour after the King had come into the cabinet. Madame la Duchesse and Madame la Princesse de Conti divided their cares between the dying man and the King, to whom they constantly came back; whilst the faculty confounded, the valets bewildered, the courtiers hurrying and murmuring, hustled against each other, and moved unceasingly to and fro, backwards and forwards, in the same narrow space. At last the fatal moment arrived. Fagon came out, and allowed so much to be understood.

The King, much afflicted, and very grieved that

Monseigneur's confession had been so tardily made, abused Fagon a little; and went away led by Madame de Maintenon and the two Princesses. He was somewhat struck by finding the vehicle of Monseigneur outside; and made a sign that he would have another coach, for that one made him suffer, and left the château. He was not, however, so much occupied with his grief that he could not call Pontchartrain to arrange the hour of the council of the next day. I will not comment on this coolness, and shall merely say it surprised extremely all present; and that if Pontchartrain had not said the council could be put off, no interruption to business would have taken place. The King got into his coach with difficulty, supported on both sides. Madame de Maintenon seated herself beside him. A crowd of officers of Monseigneur lined both sides of the court on their knees, as he passed out, crying to him with strange howlings to have compassion on them, for they had lost all, and must die of hunger.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A rumour reaches Versailles—Aspect of the Court—Various forms of grief—The Duc d'Orleans—The news confirmed at Versailles—Behaviour of the Courtiers—The Duc and Duchesse de Berry—The Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne—Madame—A Swiss asleep—Picture of a Court—The heir apparent's night—The King returns to Marly—Character of Monseigneur—Effect of his death.

While Meudon was filled with horror, all was tranquil at Versailles, without the least suspicion. We had supped. The company some time after had retired, and I was talking with Madame de Saint Simon, who had nearly finished undressing herself to go to bed, when a servant of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who had formerly belonged to us, entered, all terrified. He said that there must be some bad news from Meudon, since Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne had just whispered in the ear of M. le Duc de Berry, whose eyes had at once become red, that he left the table, and that all the company shortly after him rose with precipitation. So sudden a change rendered my surprise extreme. I ran in hot haste to Madame la Duchesse de Berry's. Nobody was there. Everybody had gone to Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne. I followed on with all speed.

I found all Versailles assembled or arriving, all the ladies hastily dressed—the majority having been on the point of going to bed—all the doors open, and all in

trouble. I learnt that Monseigneur had received the extreme unction, that he was without consciousness and beyond hope, and that the King had sent word to Madame de Bourgogne that he was going to Marly, and that she was to meet him as he passed through the avenue between the two stables.

The spectacle before me attracted all the attention I could bestow. The two Princes and the two Princesses were in the little cabinet behind the bed. The bed-toilette was as usual in the chamber of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, which was filled with all the Court in confusion. She came and went from the cabinet to the chamber, waiting for the moment when she was to meet the King; and her demeanour, always distinguished by the same graces, was one of trouble and compassion, which the trouble and compassion of others induced them to take for grief. Now and then, in passing, she said a few rare words. All present were in truth expressive personages. Whoever had eyes, without any knowledge of the Court, could see the interests of all interested painted on their faces, and the indifference of the indifferent: these tranquil, the former penetrated with grief, or gravely attentive to themselves to hide their emancipation and their joy.

For my part, my first care was to inform myself thoroughly of the state of affairs, fearing lest there might be too much alarm for too trifling a cause; then recovering myself I reflected upon the misery common to all men, and that I myself should find myself some day at the gates of death. Joy, nevertheless, found its way through the momentary reflections of religion and

of humanity, by which I tried to master myself. My own private deliverance seemed so great and so unhoped for, that it appeared to me that the State must gain everything by such a loss. And with these thoughts I felt, in spite of myself, a lingering fear lest the sick man should recover, and was extremely ashamed of it.

Wrapped up thus in myself, I did not fail, nevertheless, to cast clandestine looks upon each face, to see what was passing there. I saw Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans arrive, but her countenance, majestic and constrained, said nothing. She went into the little cabinet, whence she presently issued with the Duc d'Orleans, whose activity and turbulent air marked his emotion at the spectacle more than any other sentiment. They went away, and I notice this expressly, on account of what happened afterwards in my presence.

Soon afterwards I caught a distant glimpse of the Duc de Bourgogne, who seemed much moved and troubled; but the glance with which I probed him rapidly, revealed nothing tender, and told merely of a mind profoundly occupied with the bearings of what had taken place.

Valets and chamber-women were already indiscreetly crying out; and *their* grief showed well that they were about to lose something!

Towards half-past twelve we had news of the King, and immediately after Madame de Bourgogne came out of the little cabinet with the Duc, who seemed more touched than when I first saw him. The Princesse took her scarf and her coifs from the toilette, standing with a deliberate air, her eyes scarcely wet—a fact

betrayed by inquisitive glances cast rapidly to the right and left—and, followed only by her ladies, went to her coach by the great staircase.

I took the opportunity to go to the Duchesse d'Orleans, where I found many people. Their presence made me very impatient; the Duchesse, who was equally impatient, took a light and went in. I whispered in the ear of the Duchesse de Villeroy, who thought as I thought of this event. She nudged me, and said in a very low voice, that I must contain myself. I was smothered with silence, amidst the complaints and the narrative surprises of these ladies; but at last M. le Duc d'Orleans appeared at the door of his cabinet, and beckoned me to come to him.

I followed him into the cabinet, where we were alone. What was my surprise, remembering the terms on which he was with Monseigneur, to see the tears streaming from his eyes!

"Sir!" exclaimed I, rising. He understood me at once; and answered in a broken voice, really crying: "You are right to be surprised—I am surprised myself; but such a spectacle touches. He was a man with whom I passed much of my life, and who treated me well when he was uninfluenced. I feel very well that my grief won't last long; in a few days I shall discover motives of joy; at present, blood, relationship, humanity,—all work; and my entrails are moved." I praised his sentiments, but repeated my surprise. He rose, thrust his head into a corner, and with his nose there, wept bitterly and sobbed, which if I had not seen I could not have believed.

After a little silence, however, I exhorted him to calm himself. I represented to him that, everybody knowing on what terms he had been with Monseigneur, he would be laughed at, as playing a part, if his eyes showed that he had been weeping. He did what he could to remove the marks of his tears, and we then went back into the other room.

The interview of the Duchess de Bourgogne with the King had not been long. She met him in the avenue between the two stables, got down, and went to the door of the carriage. Madame de Maintenon cried out, "Where are you going? We bear the plague about with us." I do not know what the King said or did. The Princesse returned to her carriage, and came back to Versailles, bringing in reality the first news of the actual death of Monseigneur.

Acting upon the advice of M. de Beauvilliers, all the company had gone into the salon. The two Princes, Monseigneur de Bourgogne and M. de Berry, were there, seated on one sofa, their Princesses at their side; all the rest of the company were scattered about in confusion, seated or standing, some of the ladies being on the floor, near the sofa. There could be no doubt of what had happened. It was plainly written on every face in the chamber and throughout the apartment. Monseigneur was no more: it was known: it was spoken of: constraint with respect to him no longer existed. Amidst the surprise, the confusion, and the movements that prevailed, the sentiments of all were painted to the life in looks and gestures.

In the outside rooms were heard the constrained

groans and sighs of the valets—grieving for the master they had lost as well as for the master that had succeeded. Farther on began the crowd of courtiers of all kinds. The greater number—that is to say the fools—pumped up sighs as well as they could, and with wandering but dry eyes, sung the praises of Monseigneur—insisting especially on his goodness. They pitied the King for the loss of so good a son. The keener began already to be uneasy about the health of the King; and admired themselves for preserving so much judgment amidst so much trouble, which could be perceived by the frequency of their repetitions. Others, really afflicted—the discomfited Cabal—wept bitterly, and kept themselves under with an effort as easy to notice as sobs. The most strongminded or the wisest, with eyes fixed on the ground, in corners, meditated on the consequences of such an event—and especially on their own interests. Few words passed in conversation—here and there an exclamation wrung from grief was answered by some neighbouring grief—a word every quarter of an hour—sombre and haggard eyes—movements quite involuntary of the hands—immobility of all other parts of the body. Those who already looked upon the event as favourable in vain exaggerated their gravity so as to make it resemble chagrin and severity; the veil over their faces was transparent and hid not a single feature. They remained as motionless as those who grieved most, fearing opinion, cusiosity, their own satisfaction, their every movement; but their eyes made up for their immobility. Indeed they could not refrain from repeatedly changing their attitude like

people ill at ease, sitting or standing, from avoiding each other too carefully, even from allowing their eyes to meet—nor repress a manifest air of liberty—nor conceal their increased liveliness—not put out a sort of brilliancy which distinguished them in spite of themselves.

The two Princes, and the two Princesses who sat by their sides, were more exposed to view than any other. The Duc de Bourgogne wept with tenderness, sincerity, and gentleness, the tears of nature, of religion, and patience. M. le Duc de Berry also sincerely shed abundance of tears, but bloody tears, so to speak, so great appeared their bitterness; and he uttered not only sobs, but cries, nay, even yells. He was silent sometimes, but from suffocation, and then would burst out again with such a noise, such a trumpet sound of despair, that the majority present burst out also at these dolorous repetitions, either impelled by affliction or decorum. He became so bad, in fact, that his people were forced to undress him then and there, put him to bed, and call in the doctor. Madame la Duchesse de Berry was beside herself, and we shall soon see why. The most bitter despair was painted with horror on her face. There was seen written, as it were, a sort of furious grief, based on interest, not affection; now and then came dry lulls deep and sullen, then a torrent of tears and involuntary gestures, yet restrained, which showed extreme bitterness of mind. fruit of the profound meditation that had preceded. Often aroused by the cries of her husband, prompt to assist him, to support him, to embrace him,

to give her smelling-bottle, her care for him was evident; but soon came another profound reverie—then a gush of tears assisted to suppress her cries. As for Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne she consoled her husband with less trouble than she had to appear herself in want of consolation. Without attempting to play a part, it was evident that she did her best to acquit herself of a pressing duty of decorum. But she found extreme difficulty in keeping up appearances. When the Prince her brother-in-law howled, she blew her nose. She had brought some tears along with her and kept them up with care; and these combined with the art of the handkerchief, enabled her to redden her eyes, and make them swell, and smudge her face; but her glances often wandered on the sly to the countenances of all present.

Madame arrived, in full dress she knew not why, and howling she knew not why, inundated everybody with her tears in embracing them, making the château echo with renewed cries, and furnished the odd spectacle of a Princess putting on her robes of ceremony in the dead of night to come and cry among a crowd of women with but little on except their night dresses,—almost as masqueraders.

In the gallery several ladies, Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, Madame de Castries, and Madame de Saint Simon among the rest, finding no one close by, drew near each other by the side of a tent-bedstead, and began to open their hearts to each other, which they did with the more freedom, inasmuch as they had but one sentiment in common upon what had occurred.

In this gallery, and in the salon, there were always during the night several beds, in which, for security's sake, certain Swiss guards and servants slept. These beds had been put in their usual place this evening before the bad news came from Meudon. In the midst of the conversation of the ladies, Madame de Castries touched the bed, felt something move, and was much terrified. A moment after they saw a sturdy arm, nearly naked, raise on a sudden the curtains, and thus show them a great brawny Swiss under the sheets, half awake, and wholly amazed. The fellow was a long time in making out his position, fixing his eyes upon every face one after the other; but at last, not judging it advisable to get up in the midst of such a grand company, he reburied himself in his bed, and closed the curtains. Apparently the good man had gone to bed before anything had transpired, and had slept so soundly ever since that he had not been aroused until then. The saddest sights have often the most ridiculous contrasts. This caused some of the ladies to laugh, and made Madame d'Orleans fear lest the conversation should have been overheard. But after reflection, the sleep and the stupidity of the sleeper reassured her.

I had some doubts yet as to the event that had taken place; for I did not like to abandon myself to belief, until the word was pronounced by some one in whom I could have faith. By chance I met d'O., and I asked him. He answered me clearly that Monseigneur was no more. Thus answered, I tried not to be glad. I know not if I succeeded well, but

at least it is certain, that neither joy nor sorrow blunted my curiosity, and that while taking due care to preserve all decorum, I did not consider myself in any way forced to play the doleful. I no longer feared any fresh attack from the citadel of Meudon, nor any cruel charges from its implacable garrison. I felt, therefore, under no constraint, and followed every face with my glances, and tried to scrutinise them unobserved. It must be admitted, that for him who is well acquainted with the privacies of a Court, the first sight of rare events of this nature, so interesting in so many different respects, is extremely satisfactory. Every countenance reeals the cares, the intrigues, the labours employed in the advancement of fortunes—in the overthrow of rivals : the relations, the coldness, the hatreds, the evil offices done, the baseness of all ; hope, despair, rage, satisfaction, express themselves in the features. See how all eyes wander to and fro examining what passes around—how some are astonished to find others more mean, or less mean than was expected ! Thus this spectacle produced a pleasure, which, hollow as it may be, is one of the greatest a Court can bestow.

The turmoil in this vast apartment lasted about an hour, at the end of which, M. de Beauvilliers thought it was high time to deliver the Princes of their company. The rooms were cleared. M. le Duc de Berry went away to his rooms, partly supported by his wife. All through the night he asked, amid tears and cries, for news from Meudon; he would not understand the cause of the King's departure to Marly. When at

length the mournful curtain was drawn from before his eyes, the state he fell into cannot be described. The night of Monseigneur and Madame de Bourgogne was more tranquil. Some one having said to the Princesse, that having no real cause to be affected, it would be terrible to play a part, she replied, quite naturally, that without feigning, pity touched her and decorum controlled her; and indeed she kept herself within these bounds with truth and decency. Their chamber, in which they invited several ladies to pass the night in arm-chairs, became immediately a palace of Morpheus. All quietly fell asleep. The curtains were left open, so that the Prince and Princesse could be seen sleeping profoundly. They woke up once or twice for a moment. In the morning the Duc and Duchesse rose early, their tears quite dried up. They shed no more for this cause, except on special and rare occasions. The ladies who had watched and slept in their chamber, told their friends how tranquil the night had been. But nobody was surprised, and as there was no longer a Monseigneur, nobody was scandalised. Madame de Saint Simon and I remained up two hours before going to bed, and then went there without feeling any want of rest. In fact, I slept so little that at seven in the morning I was up; but it must be admitted that such restlessness is sweet, an such re-awakenings are savoury.

Horror reigned at Meudon. As soon as the King left all the courtiers left also, crowding into the first carriages that came. In an instant Meudon was empty. Mademoiselle Choin remained alone in her

garret, and unaware of what had taken place. She learned it only by the cry raised. Nobody thought of telling her. At last some friends went up to her, hurried her into a hired coach, and took her to Paris. The dispersion was general. One or two valets, at the most, remained near the body. La Vrillière, to his praise be it said, was the only courtier who, not having abandoned Monseigneur during life, did not abandon him after his death. He had some difficulty to find somebody to go in search of Capuchins to pray over the corpse. The decomposition became so rapid and so great, that the opening of the windows was not enough; the Capuchins, La Vrillière, and the valets, were compelled to pass the night outside.

At Marly everybody had felt so confident, that the King's return there was not dreamt of. Nothing was ready, no keys of the rooms, no fires, scarcely an end of candle. The King was more than an hour thus with Madame de Maintenon and other ladies in one of the ante-chambers. The King retired into a corner, seated between Madame de Maintenon and two other ladies, and wept at long intervals. At last the chamber of Madame de Maintenon was ready. The King entered, remained there an hour, and then went to bed at nearly four o'clock in the morning.

Monseigneur was rather tall than short; very fat, but without being bloated; with a very lofty and noble aspect without any harshness; and he would have had a very agreeable face if M. le Prince de Conti had not unfortunately broken his nose in playing while they were both young. He was of a very beautiful fair

complexion; he had a face everywhere covered with a healthy red, but without expression; the most beautiful legs in the world; his feet singularly small and delicate. He wavered always in walking, and felt his way with his feet; he was always afraid of falling, and if the path was not perfectly even and straight, he called for assistance. He was a good horseman, and looked well when mounted; but he was not a bold rider. When hunting—they had persuaded him that he liked this amusement—a servant rode before him; if he lost sight of this servant he gave himself up for lost, slacked his pace to a gentle trot, and oftentimes waited under a tree for the hunting party, and returned to it slowly. He was very fond of the table, but always without indecency. Ever since that great attack of indigestion, which was taken at first for apoplexy, he made but one real meal a day and was content,—although a great eater, like the rest of the royal family. Nearly all his portraits well resemble him.

As for his character he had none; he was without enlightenment or knowledge of any kind, radically incapable of acquiring any; very idle, without imagination or productiveness; without taste, without choice, without discernment; neither seeing the weariness he caused others, nor that he was as a ball moving at haphazard by the impulsion of others; obstinate and little to excess in everything; amazingly credulous and accessible to prejudice, keeping himself, always, in the most pernicious hands, yet incapable of seeing his position or of changing it; absorbed in his fat and his ignorance;

so that without any desire to do ill he would have made a pernicious King.

His avariciousness, except in certain things, passed all belief. He kept an account of his personal expenditure, and knew to a penny what his smallest and his largest expenses amounted to. He spent large sums in building, in furniture, in jewels, and in hunting which he made himself believe he was fond of.

It is inconceivable the little he gave to La Choin whom he so much loved. It never exceeded four hundred louis a quarter in gold, or sixteen hundred louis a year, whatever the louis might be worth. He gave them to her with his own hand, without adding or subtracting a pistole, and, at the most, made her but one present a year, and that he looked at twice before giving. It was said that they were married, and certain circumstances seemed to justify this rumour. As, for instance, during the illness of Monseigneur, the King, as I have said, asked Madame de Maintenon if she had seen Mademoiselle Choin, and upon receiving a negative reply, was displeased. Instead of driving her away from the chateau he inquired particularly after her! This, to say the least, looked as though Mademoiselle Choin was Monseigneur's Maintenon; but the matter remained incomprehensible to the last. Mademoiselle Choin threw no light upon it, although she spoke on many other things concerning Monseigneur in the modest home at Paris, to which she had retired for the rest of her days. The King gave her a pension of twelve thousand livres.

Monseigneur was, I have said, ignorant to the last

degree, and had a thorough aversion for learning; so that, according to his own admission, ever since he had been released from the hands of teachers he had never read anything except the article in the "Gazette de France," in which deaths and marriages are recorded. His timidity, especially before the King, was equal to his ignorance, which indeed contributed not a little to cause it. The King took advantage of it, and never treated him as a son, but as a subject. He was the monarch always, never the father. Monseigneur had not the slightest influence with the King. If he showed any preference for a person it was enough! That person was sure to be kept back by the King. The King was so anxious to show that Monseigneur could do nothing, that Monseigneur after a time did not even try. He contented himself by complaining occasionally in monosyllables, and by hoping for better times.

The body of Monseigneur so soon grew decomposed, that immediate burial was necessary. At midnight on Wednesday he was carried, with but little ceremony, to St. Denis, and deposited in the royal vaults. His funeral services were said at St. Denis on the 18th of the following June, and at Nôtre Dame on the 3rd of July. As the procession passed through Paris nothing but cries, acclamations, and eulogiums of the defunct were heard. Monseigneur had, I know not how, much endeared himself to the common people of Paris, and this sentiment soon gained the provinces; so true it is, that in France it costs little to its Princes to make themselves almost adored!

The King soon got over his affliction for the loss of this son of fifty. Never was a man so ready with tears, so backward with grief, or so promptly restored to his ordinary state. The morning after the death of Monseigneur he rose late, called M. de Beauvilliers into his cabinet, shed some more tears, and then said that from that time Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne and Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne were to enjoy the honours, the rank, and the name of Dauphin and of Dauphine. Henceforth I shall call them by no other names.

My joy at this change may be imagined. In a few days all my causes of disquietude had been removed, and I saw a future opening before me full of light and promise. Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne become Dauphin, heir to the throne of France; what favour might I not hope for? I could not conceal or control my satisfaction.

But alas! it was soon followed by sad disappointment and grievous sorrow.*

* The death of Monseigneur leaving Louis XIV., almost in his dotage, on the throne, surrounded by young princes and princesses impatient for a new reign, worked a wonderful change in the Court of France. The subsequent volumes of these Memoirs will show the steps that led to the Regency of the Duc d'Orleans, and describe the state of France under that prince.

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